

UNGAWA!

#4

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**FREAKS
BUXOTICS
AND WILDMEN!**

All New.... All exciting
including

THE KING OF COOL **JOHN SAXON**
THE DYNAMIC **Kitten Natividad**

BLUE DEMON AND SON
BLOWFLY

BY **RIEK SULLIVAN**
MARTIN DENNY

PLUS! PLUS! PLUS!
SAMUEL Z. ARKOFF
JOHNNY ECK
AND **CHESTER HIMES**

AMERICAN MAVERICK SPECIAL



CONTENTS



Letters - 3 John Saxon - 6 Himes - 10 Books - 13
Gore Gazette - 14 Lowlife Scum - 19 Blowfly - 20 Johnny Eck - 24
Kitten - 27 Samuel Z. Arkoff - 30 Films - 32 Vampire Clubs - 33
Blue Demon - 34 Martin Denny - 36 Books and Things - 39



"Do the mysteries of native rituals intrigue you... does the haunted beat of savage drums fascinate you?" answer Yes, and slip into the world of UNGAWA! the rag-o-zine filled with potent, pulsating opposites.

Pure, Untainted, Unashamed - these are the bywords of UNGAWA!

A million missives have popped my way. Questions, Questions, Questions. Letters and cards filled with heavy duty thoughts from fevered brains. They mull on fierce imponderables. "What is UNGAWA!?", "What does the title mean?", "What's your manifesto - Are you Liberals, Madmen or What?" Some scribes supply their own answers, they wax wicked; is UNGAWA! "A cry of love in a world of pain?"

You bet it is, Bub. You bet it is!

Others ask why do we focus on the past when there's so much hip new stuff around? Forget the present, Mookmeat, that's the playground for assholes. No names who have all the answers. We look to the past because we love it. It's a nifty way to escape the crapcall of feigned hipness... it's time to look backward, Angel... slip into a different world and return refreshed. Ready, eager and able to do battle.

But enough of the potted tirade, lets kickstart the Mothership... Yee-haw! Look out as next issue we return to feast and feed off English Vice and Weirdness. So, if you think you can fill the Limesville + UNGAWA! equation, wing it our way, brother.

Your pal FOSS

UNGAWA! - 'Gentle in Tempo . . Violent in Excitement!!

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Thanks to those who loved and kept the flame... death to the pukey infidel!

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London NW6 2EQ, England.

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ISSN 0963 7540
Coverart Aran C.





Tell it to Honey!

Thank you so much for the copy of the magazine. It's enjoyable reading, but as you said there were a few typos. For instance: I never said that Hadji was married to Bill Smith. She was going out with him for quite some time, but they never got married. Hadji and I talked about doing a sequel to 'Faster Pussycat'. But I guess that's impossible since we are supposed to be dead.

My oldest daughter, Kalani Davis, has three children, two boys and one girl. My youngest daughter, Jade Fell, just gave birth to a bouncing baby boy on April 12 1991.

As I said, I'm just an average female. But someday I'm going to write the story of my life with all my loves, hurts, disappointments, heartaches, ups and downs, highs and lows.

Tura Satana
Reno, Nevada, USA

THE 'RAGE OVER PAGE' CONTINUES.

Cool letters column, but 'Betty Page, she was never particularly good looking'. Gasp! My Heart! I know to each his or her own, but Betty is a lovely lady in my humble opinion. I would never throw her out of my bed for eating crackers.

Conrad Widener
S. Connellsville, PA, USA

What's all this stuff about Betty Page... surely this is just the latest attempt at 'The Emperor's New Clothes'. Personally, I find Betty Page and the rash of Page T-shirts tedious. Basically

it's a bunch of no talent bums trying to make fast bucks from saps who think they are at the cutting edge of hipdom. If Bob Geldof wears a Page T-shirt how can it be now, new and hep? Yours pissed off with Page
Derek Forbes
Aldiston Ave, Sunderland

DOBERMAN DOZENS

While this list is by no means any kind of a Top Film List or anything like that. It is a list of films that take me to the edge:

- 1) Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer
Hey Grodzinski - Kiss my ass!!!! Henry is one of the best to come out in years! Nuff said.
- 2) Fiend without a Face
Once you see the fiend you never forget it. A Brain with a spinal cord.
They make a great squishing, gurgling sound when you shoot them.
- 3) Night of the Living Dead
- 4) The Flesh Eaters
Mad scientist creates microbe monsters that strip flesh from the bone! Victims drink a glass of Flesh Eaters! A giant eyeball creature gets poked in the eye with a giant syringe full of Blood.
Yowwww!!!
- 5) Return of the Living Dead & Reanimator
- 6) 5 Million miles to Earth (Quatermass and the Pit)
A true sci-fi masterpiece. Buried spaceship, Grasshopper-like Alien creatures and the end of the world!
- 7) Frankenhooker
Sex, drugs, Rock'n'Roll, self-lobotomies & supercrack.

8) Bad Taste

When was the last time you saw a guy eat brains with a spoon and then suck down some alien vomit a short while later?

9) Burial Ground

Italian gore classic... head blasts, eye gouging and a kid munching on his Mom's tit. Nasty stuff.

10) Angry Red Planet

Great Monsters - a giant Bat Rat! someone should make a model kit for this!

11) The Beast Within

Best head explosion ever!

12) Dead and Buried

Under rated film, great kills... and a surprise ending.

Al Shevy

World of Fandom. PO Box 9421, Tampa FL 33604, USA

Always glad to list movies that I've personally enjoyed, even if they maybe have done some permanent damage:

1) Deranged

The feeding-the-soup-to-Mom scene is especially fascinating... also pretty sick.

2) Maniac

The worst film I've ever had the misfortune of vomiting through. The filmmakers were so obsessed with gore they never even let Caroline Munroe get naked!

3) Ms 45

A great depiction of how the pressures of life can make anyone insane. The ending with Zoe Tamerlis dressed as nun/Angel of Death is great.

4) The Hills have Eyes

5) Damian: The Omen 2

6) Kid Blue

Quasi new-age hip Western with Dennis Hopper and Lee Purcell.

7) Cruising

Interesting gay S & M opus with Joe Spinelli as creepy cop/gay S & M freak.

8) Don't look in the Basement

Great ending and the first movie like this I ever saw!

9) Rock & Roll High School

10) Desperate Living

'Can you ever love my operation.'

11) The Incredible Two Headed Transplant

I liked this really cheap flick, even more after star Bruce Dern said he was supposed to go back to the film for one last scene before getting paid, and found the film set deserted!

12) The President's Analyst

Hippy dippy shit... I'll trade you some of that good grass for some of that groovy acid!

Bob Katerzynske

Editor: Videomania

PO Box 47

Princeton, Wisconsin 54968 USA

1) The Hunchback of the Morgue
Hunchbacked Naschy goes to extremes in order to restore life to his dead girlfriend... a macabre chronicle.

2) Gialla o Venezia

Strange Italian thriller with lots of sick sex and some shockingly violent

murders.

3) Hatchet for the Honeymoon
Bava's most twisted effort! An unhappily married guy kills women wearing wedding gowns, and when he can't get his wife to put hers on, dons one himself for inspiration.

4) Buried Alive
Cannibalism, Voodoo, Murder, Perverted Sex, Organ removals and Joe D'Amato!

5) Horrible Dr Hitchcock
Skin crawling necrophilia and the deliciously scared Barbara Steele.

6) Sie Totete in Ekstase
Franco's Mrs Hyde... unmissable.

7) Torture Chamber of Dr Sadism
Setpiece loaded Kraut Horror... Chris Lee needs the vital fluids of just one more virgin!

8) The Blood Splattered Bride
Powerful ending in this Spanish made lesbian Vampire flick.

9) Mark of the Devil
Abused & underrated. Great Vomit Bag Ad Campaign!

10) El Buque Maldito
3rd and cheapest looking Blind Dead flick. Rotting corpses and bikini clad models... a classic!

11) Latidos de Pánico
Multiple Murders and one of Naschy's best.

12) La Residencia
Uncut & Disturbing
Bob Sargent, Editor: Videoreze
PO Box 9911, Alexandria
VA 22304, USA

... these lists should give you some idea of where those zine-eds are coming from, what type of things move them and what to expect inside the pages of their magazines! The day of the 'Doberman' isn't over yet! Send those 12 ugly mothers in and we'll keep printing them.

things

CINE ZINE ZONE

Mama Mia! - these Frenchies really get to grips with 'B' Movies, cheesy comics and other neglected nuggets from the past. Hitting the 50 issue mark and still no signs of slowing down, Cine Zine Zone is a mighty juggernaut indeed. With each issue weighing in at 80 or so pages it really does deserve the moniker 'The Bible of Trash'. An overpowering feast of photos and info in this French language zine make it a truly indispensable item! 35 Francs per issue from:

Pierre Charles
16 Avenue Emile Zola
94100 Saint Maur, France
Check out his pectoral busting Steve Reeves Double Issue or the Howard Vernon Special... a religious experience indeed.

FAVOURITE FILMS

Regarding my favourite films you didn't say if you wanted them in any order, so I will just list them not to mean the first of them is the best of the ten: 'Yankee, Doodle, Dandy', 'The Ten Commandments', 'It's a Wonderful Life', 'The Sound of Music', 'Ghost', 'Blind Justice', 'Once Upon a Time in America', 'Chariots of Fire', 'Glory', 'The Greatest Show on Earth' and 'The Godfather 1 & 2'. ... I enjoy movies - Hey to the others even the bum Liam.

John Wayne Gacy
Lock Box 711, Menard, Illinois
USA 62259

UNGAWAI! CONTACTS COLUMN & LONELY HEARTS

I saw a piece on Twiggy on TV and I think Princess Diana is the reincarnation of the 60s Twiggy - much ado about very little, don't you think? One more question please: I'm a good looking single guy, but I seem to frequently be frustrated by my less than successful luck with BABETTES. If I visited England or even Ireland, where I do speak the same language and I do drink a lot of beer, would the ENGLISH WOMEN CONSIDER ME AN AMERICAN ADONIS STUD?

Seriously though, how can I write to some pretty English Babes? Surely you dudes know because of course UNGAWAI! means 'producers of hot sex' in the Kansas Indians Language!!!

Sincerely,
Jim Lasley
5620 Perry Ave, Shawnee Mission,
Kansas 66203, USA

Here at Ungawai! we find it hard to resist a plea from the heart no matter how strange, twisted and demented so if there are any lonesome 'Babettes' out there, hungry for penfriends why not hook up with this All-American hunk.

HELLO UNGAWAI! READERS

My name is G.J. Schaefer. The 'True Crime' media in America call me The Sex Beast. State Prosecutor Robert Stone calls me 'America's Number One Serial Killer'. He says he can prove I killed 34 juicy young women and suspects that I killed many more. In 1973, I was convicted of murder and sent to America's most repressive penitentiary, Florida State Prison, located in the fetid North Florida Swamp. Florida State Prison is the designated execution site for both men and women condemned to death from 67 counties, 20 State judicial circuits and 3 Federal districts. Because I was the only prison inmate with formal legal training, I am a graduate of the Florida Criminal Justice Institute (Class of '72). I was assigned to assist condemned prisoners with Habeas Corpus petitions. In 1978, I wrote my first book about my experiences with homicidal maniacs called 'Killer Fiction', which details some of the most graphic and horrifying crimes ever described in print. 'Killer

Fiction' includes murder by strangulation; young girls butchered and fed to the sharks off Fort Lauderdale. 'K.F.' also reveals the grisly secrets of the prison death chambers where screaming men and women are burned alive in the electric chair. The reader learns the shocking truth about execution: the body shave, the anal plug, the vaginal stuffing and the rubber diapers - the necrophilic sex with the hot corpses of executed females! 'Killer Fiction' was seized by the State of Florida in an attempt to stop publication, but the State did not attempt to deny the disgusting truths revealed in that book. They did not dare deny it!

In 1990, I wrote 'Beyond Killer Fiction' in response to readers demands for more true crime stories. This book is the only true account of the savage sex murders of Ted Bundy as told to me by Ted himself. Acts so repulsive that they could not be previously revealed to the civilised world. At last the mystique of Ted Bundy is ripped away and he is exposed in all his terrible malignancy. 'BKF' holds nothing back! The reader is taken on a tour of human slaughter unequalled in the annals of crime literature. The chilling insane world of Bundy and his depraved ilk is brought to life by the man who heard it all first hand as foul killers awaited the summons to the death chamber! The work concludes with the bungled execution of Jesse Joe Tafero, whose flesh burst into flames as he sat in the prison death chair. An electrical malfunction caused Tafero's head to burn to a cinder! The electrodes were so badly damaged that the execution of Judy Buenoano - 'The Black Widow Murderess' who was to die after Tafero, had to be postponed. 'Beyond Killer Fiction'! It will make you vomit!

.... Now for the first time in the UK you may write a personal letter to G.J. Schaefer and ask any question you wish. No topic is taboo: Curious about Ted Bundy? What prison life is really like? The sodomisation of young convict boys? The details concerning the execution of young women? Serial Killers? Ask whatever you wish... the best replies will be printed in UNGAWAI! Send your questions to G.J. Schaefer's Killer Enquiries, c/o Media Queen Publishing Company
8825 Roswell Road, Suite 474
Atlanta GA 30350 USA
or send \$15 for copies of the shocking 'Beyond Killer Fiction'.





Beating time with John Saxon

Fred 'the Hammer' Williamson to Marlon Brando, and Larry Hagman to Mame Van Doren, he's worked with them all. Only one thing has remained constant, no matter how big or lowly the flick - he's always delivered. As a 'Jobbing Actor' he's taken more than a few bread and butter projects, and turned in a good performance in them all. So, what's the secret of his durability and success? Everyone knows that it takes more than just hard work and professionalism to make it, so what's his secret? Well for starters, he's got charisma and class. He was one of the very last of the Hollywood Matinee Idols, and brings a hint of old style Hollywood glamour and magic to anything he appears in, but more importantly he's always fun to watch!

John Saxon - to most folks he's one of those familiar faces that you see popping up, and propping up a whole host of films. To rabid cinema slurpers he's an unsung hero, a guy who's given a touch of class to everything from 50s teenpics, sanitised melodramas to Cannibal Movies, Existential Westerns and crowd-pleasing Kung Fu films.

He started his career as a male model, graduating to acting, and after a few walk-on parts was picked up by *Universal*. Inside the studio system he became another one of those young hunks groomed to be a girl-pulling Teen Idol. There were plenty of them around in the Fifties and usually their time at the top was high profile and short lasting. The average Teen or Matinee Idol usually had a few brief years of fame and then disappeared into nothingness or obscurity. Some like *Tab Hunter* dropped out for a few decades, while others like the unfortunate *Farley Granger* slipped from European art films into cinematic sleaze!

Unlike most of his cleancut contemporaries John Saxon weathered the decades well. He kept working and appeared in a ball-busting variety of projects... some great, some good and some real non-starters. He headlined in Italian thrillers like Mario Bava's *The Girl who knew too Much*, he gave solid support in *Enter the Dragon*, *Queen of Blood* and *Fast Company*, and he added a dash of style to *Black Christmas* and *Nightmare on Elm Street*.

Take a look at the films he's been in and you'll see he's worked with nearly everybody in the business, from John Huston to Eddie Romero, from

What made you decide to become an actor?

Nearly all the Italian-American teenagers in my neighborhood in Brooklyn thought they were as good looking as Tony Curtis... and tougher. I was in part influenced by my environment.

One of your earliest films was 'Running Wild' with Mame Van Doren, Keenan Wynn. Do you remember anything interesting about this production?

Keenan Wynn yelled at me once for sitting in his chair on the set. Didn't I have any respect? He took me for a motor-cycle ride on his motor-cycle to make up for it. I didn't want to do either again.

I was too young and too tender for Mame at that time; I was nineteen. We dated once, I was in the minority of the contract players at Universal at that time who didn't get to know her well.



School pic of the Sax-man

You made a couple of films with Rod McKuen - 'Summer Love' and 'Rock, Pretty Baby'. Rod played a character called 'Ox' Bentley. Have you had any contact with Rod since those films? Other than Christmas cards, that Rod McKuen used to send each year until about five or six years ago, the last time I saw him was on the publicity tour of

'Rock, Pretty Baby', in 1957? I got angry with him then, on that tour, for begging the fans to write us Fan letters at the Studio.

'Cry Tough' was an important film in the early part of your career, one of your first steps towards grittier more realistic dramas. Rumour has it that on 'Cry Tough' two versions were shot, one with extra love scenes. Is that true? 'Cry Tough', had scenes shot for the 'French' or 'European' version. In it Linda Cristal wore a see through Pignoir. And there was a scene in which she and I were in bed making love. The Producers felt Linda needed help, at the time, and the make-up man Bob Schiffer designed breasts made of mortician wax to amplify her own. This somehow is all a little like a dream to me, but I remember the breasts stood defiantly erect until they began to melt from the heat of the lights, and point in different directions. I don't know whether this version was seen anywhere. I don't remember seeing it myself. I only remember seeing rushes of scenes where I lay across Linda. And I remember having a real nocturnal dream that night in which I felt envious of Linda for having the opportunity for so much exposure and attention.

What was it like working with Vincente Minelli ('Reluctant Debutante')?

Vincente Minelli could be nasty. Like Otto Preminger, but not as threatening, he could and would pick on people, often extras. I caught one such session in a scene that involved several people, Angela Lansbury being one, Peter Myers I think also. He needled and berated me to get me to do something I felt was slightly over the top. Eventually it must've been an acceptable compromise.

"Debutante" was my first comedy, and Minelli was a stylist; something I would have appreciated more about him a little later. But, for example, when he layed out a scene miming how you would end up in this spot, in this position, holding the cigarette this way . . . (this way) my eyes widen even now, in memory of how I felt.

You've appeared in some great films and many good films. Surely two of the strangest you've starred in are Walt Disney's 'The Big Fisherman' with Howard Keel as Saint Peter; and 'The Unforgiven' the John Huston Epic, (with Lilian Gish, Audie Murphy and Burt Lancaster). Can you tell us something about



Mamie! Mamie! Mamie!

all the other horses in scenes. I struggled to control him, I had to, I couldn't pull ahead of Simon Peter (Howard Keel) . . . because Simon had just been talking to Jesus in the previous scene.

'The Unforgiven' was like my baptism to the big time adventure of filming on location, mostly due to John Huston, and Mexico. At lunch break, the Mexican crew played soccer or target shot with their pistols. Emilio Fernandez was always armed with a .45, and his room at the Mexico Courts Motel looked like it was prepared for a siege: rifles and boxes of ammunition, five gallon jugs of Mezcal.

Audie Murphy on one occasion took to jesting by firing his pistol across a river at me and Doug McClure. An American who claimed to be a Pistolero guarding the Silver mines . . . was looking to engage Audie in a duel. The payroll offices were robbed at gunpoint. The biography 'The Hustons' I think, suggested that the same guys suspected of doing this were smuggling Pre-Columbian art out of Mexico for John Huston.

John Huston, staying at some Villa, kept saying that it was the easiest location he'd ever been on and insisted that all members of the cast come to the set everyday whether they were scheduled to work or not.

There was little else to do so I bought myself a .22 rifle, had a leather scabbard made for it, put it on my horse and rode out from the set into the wilderness each day, and shot at rocks, and read Nikos Kazantzakis 'The Odyssey' out loud in the accent I was using for the character, Johnny Portugal.

I had one encounter with John Huston during the scene, which he improvised on the moment, where I chased Joseph Wiseman by riding bareback and leading other three horses by a length of rope. I'd never ridden bareback in my life. I said I expected he'd want me to ride just out of camera range, he said no, I said, okay, how far do you want me to ride? He said: "See those rocks?" the rocks were more than a mile away, and I realized I was being challenged. I said okay.

I jumped up onto the saddleless horse. Burt



Cry Tough & Linda Cristal

these unusual films?

'The Big Fisherman' was strange. It was the swan song of a group of men who had had great earlier careers, some in the silent movies; Frank Borzage the director being the most notable. The writer: Estabrook, Howard, I think. Producer: Roland V. Lee. Consequently, I heard language I'd never heard before: He can't kiss the girl, it's only the second reel!

Playing Voldi, the Arab Prince, I rode a spirited Arab pony which couldn't resist galloping ahead of

Lancaster handed the rope leading to the three skinny horses my character was supposed to transfer to while riding down Joe Wiseman. I kicked the mare and she left in a lurch. The other horses stayed and since I was attached by the rope in my hand I jackknifed off my horse and thudded to the ground.

When it was clear I wasn't hurt, there was laughter from onlookers and crew, and Huston's voice from his chair behind them, "How are you, Son?" I said fine. He said, good, let's do it again; this time lead your horse out a little slower.

In four attempts I got to only a third of the way to those rocks. The skinny horses would begin nipping at the mare's hindquarters causing her to go from canter to gallop, and me toppling to the ground. On the fifth try I let go of the rope, and Huston had my stunt double try it. I was relieved that he got no further than I did, that day. Word spread that Huston thought I was something else; admired me. And the horses were put into training to learn to run together.

Sax gets cornered in 'The Unguarded Moment'



Vic Morrow is quite an interesting character. How did you find him during the making of 'Posse from Hell'.

Vic Morrow was odd and a little scary. He seemed subdued during *'Posse from Hell'*. One time on location in Lone Pine he found a girl, who told him about her elaborate fantasy life involving me. He wanted me to meet her. I thanked him, listened to the girl, and thanked myself for only listening. I saw Vic Morrow only again in Rome, just weeks before he started his last film *'Twilight Zone'*.

What was it like working in the Philippines with Eddie Romero ('The Ravagers').

Eddie Romero and I have remained friends. He's very intelligent. *'The Ravagers'* was at least a genuine story though I never saw it. I did another film for him in 1982 . . . I don't know if it was ever released or under what name. Not a bad story. But the production quality was not good, due to the very limited budget.

'Queen of Blood' is an unusual film. Did you enjoy working with the young Dennis Hopper, Curtis Harrington and Florence Marley?

'Queen of Blood' was a real Corman enterprise! In this cast Gene Corman, Roger's brother, bought the rights to a Czech or Yugoslav Sci-Fi picture that had good special effects photography, for peanuts. Around that footage, Curtis Harrington and George Edwards fashioned a story to be shot in six days in which we'd fit. I took it seriously, at least while on camera; Dennis had a hard time doing even that.

'The Appaloosa/Southwest to Solara' is one of the heaviest, most symbolic westerns of the early sixties. During production did it feel like the crew or director were making something serious?

Well, to start out Marlon Brando refused to do the first twenty plus pages of *'The Appaloosa'*, because the scenes involved his life as a Buffalo hunter among the Indians. Marlon feared the Indians would not be portrayed seriously enough. So we began a

quarter of the way into the script. And this was serious for me since it highlighted the fact that this was a conflict story between two characters, played by Marlon Brando and me. But when Marlon asked me in the first days of filming what I thought of the story, I joked that well . . . it's boy gets horse, boy loses horse, boy gets horse. He laughed.

The writer, James Bridges, went on to another film at the start of *'The Appaloosa'*. And Roland Kibbee's rewrites never caught up to the improvising that had begun from the beginning on the set.

So at the end of one day Sidney Furie, Allen Miller the producer and me, all gathered in Marlon's dressing room to figure our way on through the next day. After a short while I was being listened to, I had the most ideas. Sidney Furie said great. But it was late. Who would write it? Marlon had a Bob Dylan concert to go to. The film and Furie weren't serious for him at that point. Furie turned and asked me "Do you write?" I said yes. Could I write the scene? I said yes, and did, showed Marlon the material the next morning.

Marlon read, grunted approvingly, said he didn't want to say one particular line. I said I liked it, I'd say it. The scene worked. I began to write many other scenes, some inspired by talks with Marlon. For example the arm wrestling scene. I told him stories I'd heard while filming *'The Unforgiven'* in Durango, about the Prison there using scorpions in the bedding to lessen overcrowded cells. Marlon got the idea of the arm wrestling scene, and the use of scorpions to make it deadly. And I wrote it . . . and Marlon was magnanimous to me in its filming. The producer wanted me as the villain to have a device by which I cheated in the arm wrestling to beat Marlon, who was after all the hero. Marlon resisted this thinking.

At one point I told Marlon that if things persisted the way they were going, I'd steal the movie. He merely shrugged. He didn't seem to care. He'd struggled with the Studio, to play his character as a Mexican. I found out, but the Studio resisted having the protagonist as a Mexican as not good for the film's box office potential. His disinterest was probably his response to that, though at times he came to life and worked very hard and achieved sudden and wonderful results.



But the two character conflict struggle, and especially the ending needed further development. I kept saying we're not going to end it like this are we? But Marlon had to begin *'The Countess from Hong Kong'*, with Sophia Loren, directed by Charles Chaplin, and left.



Hey Gringo, make with Ungawes!

You've worked with Mario Bava and Dario Argento. Argento is now referred to as the 'Son of Bava'. Did you see any differences or similarities between their work?

Well, thirty years ago, the difference between Italian and American moviemaking was, for example, when Mario Bava got pissed off about something he went home and naturally so did everyone else. And if he wasn't pissed off and we finished the day's work by lunch, we all went home also. I used to feel I was on vacation . . . on holiday. Not so with American filming. I don't think it's the same any more in Italy either.

There was such a spread of years between working with the two of them. 1962 and 1982, I don't think I can comment on comparisons. Bava kind of believed in this world of superstition, etc. . . I seem to remember.

Did you enjoy doing 'Fast Company' with David Cronenberg?

I thought David Cronenberg was very interesting from the start, though I hadn't seen any of his films. And 'Fast Company' was a directing job for hire for him, not something he created. Later when I read a script of his, 'The Brood', I loved what he was up to, about the unconscious becoming physicalized, and I wanted to do a part in it but didn't get it. I especially like 'Dead Ringers' and Jeremy Irons' performance. I'd like to work with Irons and very much so with Cronenberg again.

What are you up to these days?

I'm in a movie for Viacom about to appear in days on showtime Cable. It's called 'Payoff', and it stars Keith Carradine, who I think is a great guy. In it I play a mafioso with a yen for Transvestites. It's a comedy. I'm also in an independent feature called 'Frame Up 2 - The Cover Up', with Wings Hauser, Patti d'Arbanville and Margaux Hemingway, that Paul Leder directed. And I'm waiting for a start date on an Italian six episode 'Genghis Khan' to be filmed in Russia. I'm not Genghis.

In between films and TV, as an actor, I write screenplays and enjoy it a great deal. I hope to make more of this than I have so far, hoping to get it produced, and direct what I write.

I hope when Marlon is writing his autobiography he might give a word to the writing I did on the film, since no one else ever has but I won't hold my breath.

You've worked with everybody from Audie Murphy to Bergman star, Ingrid Thulin. Is there anybody you'd liked to have worked with that you haven't?

I would have liked to work with John Huston again, but never did.

My role in 'The Unforgiven', was cut significantly. I thought Huston had done that. I found out thirty years later from reading 'The Hustons', that Huston

had fought to keep my scenes in the film and that it was Burt Lancaster who wanted them cut. As for actors, I'd like to work with Marlon Brando again. Robert De Niro, Anthony Hopkins, Rebecca De Mornay. I've been reading about a woman director from New Zealand, Jane Campion, whose interests sound close to mine.

Have you ever wanted to do some theatrical appearances?

I did 'Love Letters', a play reading with Sandra Dee at a theater here in Los Angeles a month ago. First play I ever did was 'Night Must Fall', I did my best with a Welsh accent. Others: Arthur Miller's 'The Prince', Paddy Chayefsky's 'The Tenth Man', and a whole bunch of musicals, believe it or not, in Summer Stock (Provinces): 'Man of La Mancha', 'Guys and Dolls', '1776', 'Shenandoah', 'Promises, Promises' . . . Every so often.

Do you remember anything about the English film you made, 'Blood Beast from Outer Space', directed by John Gilling.

John Gilling was I think as much interested in being a pig farmer as anything else and he also thought I was one of those American film guys who knew what he was doing, so he let me do what I felt like doing.

I had a good time during the shoot and got to go to see a lot of theater while in London and meet some British actors, whom I liked and respected. I thought their approach was a good anti-dote to some aspects of the Method at that time, which tried to avoid thinking that you were structuring a play for someone to watch.

Were you ever asked to appear in 'Star Trek'?

No. But I did a TV pilot for a series, written by Gene Roddenberry, called 'Planet Earth', who created 'Star Trek'.

The interesting thing was that Roddenberry was nervous before we started filming, about the script. I was puzzled. He explained that he was afraid the humour in it would be a problem. Precisely what I liked about it! Sure enough some critics said things like "unintentional humour". Roddenberry was right. Humour and Sci-Fi didn't mix . . . yet. This was before 'Star Wars', and he had many similar character touches like their mutants etc.

So, some smart fellow comes in and knows the Network executives are afraid of 'unintentional humour', and pitches redoing it with a gritty approach like 'Delverance'. They loved the idea, and we redid it with a different title. No better, Worse.

Epilogue: 'Planet Earth', The failed TV pilot, with 'unintentional humour' is now released as a video movie almost twenty years later and people still tell me how much they like it.

You didn't ask about Bruce Lee. Nevertheless, I will tell you this daydream fantasy: A guy comes up to me in the dark, draws a gun, and says "Give me your money and your watch. He takes a closer look at me and says: "Man, you're John Saxon! what was it like working with Bruce Lee?"

Sax-O-Fax

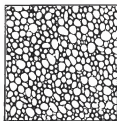
Born August 5th 1935 in Brooklyn. Original name Carmen Orrico, the super suave Sax man has appeared in a slew of films and T.V. including "The Doctors" and "Falconcrest". You'll see him deliver the goods in flicks like The Electric Horseman and Nightmare on Elm Street. Other Sax vehicles include . . .

War Hunt (1961), Mr. Hobbs takes a Vacation (1962), The Cavern (1964), The Cardinal (1963), Enter the Dragon (1973), Black Christmas (1974), Raid on Entebbe (1976), Strange Shadows in an Empty Room (1977), The Bees, Fast Company (1978), Cannibal Apocalypse (1979), Battle Beyond the Stars, The Man with the Deadly Lens (1982), The Big Score (1983).

Let's get out the shovels and dig deep into the hairy roots of **Blaxploitation** . . . Pete 'Po' Boy' Toombs scans the life and works of that mucho neglected maestro **Chester Himes**. While future generations will probably clasp this writer to their collective breasts and murmur sh-l-l-t about discovering 'the black Jim Thompson', here at Ungawal HQ we're just awed by the guy's talent and his way with the written word. Yeah boy, Chester you sure could make those words sing.

Open almost any book by him and the steely spark of his prose rips through the air like a pure untamed thing! A far cry from the dead dog pap you get nowadays. Sure, all his books are partially hit and miss, after all, the guy wrote quickly and it's clear that some things fascinated, and perked him up more than others, yet when he hit that high note - he really wailed! No other writer could capture the sizzle, sweat and menace of a larger-than-life Harlem like he could. In Himes' books you could smell the food, taste the liquor and feel your eyeballs bend with indecent enjoyment. Himes' Harlem was a place full of 'noise, heat and orgiastic odours', a place where white folks feared to tread.

By anyone's standards, Himes was a 100% Maverick, a high grade original, and like any really new talent, he didn't fit neatly into any simple pigeon hole. Most folks didn't know which way to jump when they peeped into the Black stuff he poured out in print. While the downhome Black Audience loved it and lapped it up, White critics and Black Liberals were



Chester Himes,

the self destructive gesture and his second book, 'Lonely Crusader', blew any chance of mass popularity totally away. Here was a book attacked by Blacks, slammed by whites and lampooned bitterly by the American Communist Party.

This vitriol and derision marked the beginning of a long period in the wilderness for Himes and it wasn't until the tail-end of the Fifties that he found his feet again. It was the publication of '**Five Corners Square**' (1958) in France, that launched his comeback. This was the book that gave birth to Coffin Ed Johnson and Graveyarder Jones, two of the goddamn nastiest Anti-heroes ever slapped down on paper. Johnson and Jones were cops, but they were also tough, amoral, 'Mother-Rapers', men made for a dark world of violence, graft and insidious corruption. Tougher than tough, this duo became the guides for Himes and his readers, guides into the exotic and surreal terrain of his greatest creation - Harlem! Himes' Harlem is somewhere that never really existed, it's a 'Harlem of the mind' and a place where few white folks would care to tread. It was a fiction pulsating with drugs, exotic life forms and danger, and Himes cheerfully admitted that he created it 'take it back from the white man'.

White people appear in Himes' Harlem but only as painful caricatures, uneasy adventurers, only there to ogle Black whores or chase after pansies, and Blacks hardly fare any better. Himes was no slouch, no easy option hitter, all through his life he kicked against the pricks of the Black middle classes, and in his books the selfstyled revolutionaries and Black power merchants also got the merciless Himes treatment. '**Cotton Comes to Harlem**' blasts Marcus Garvey's Back to Africa movement, and

H is for Himes

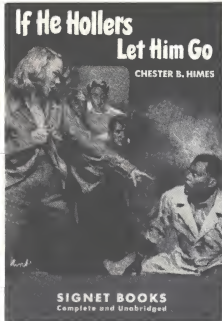
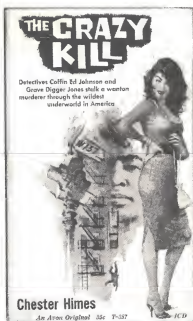
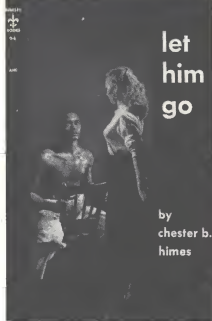
left more than a little perplexed. Many had lingering doubts that Chester was that justly despised beast - a Black Racist!!!! While most lowlife sapheads would cry 'Who Cares?' about heavy duty accusations like racism . . . that sort of misses a near point. Himes was the first guy to take the essence of Blackness and its host of stereotypes and forge it into a double-edged sword. In his books, he gave his Black audience something to savour and the White folks something to make them tremble, he played delicately on their gravest fears and resurrected the Black Myths with a vigour and vengeance.

Himes' books may have been critically ignored but they provided plenty of inspiration for far-seeing Black filmmakers. In fact one of the most firey flicks of the Seventies '**Sweet Sweetbacks Badass Song**' took Himes' literary technique and splatted it with venom onto celluloid. '**Sweetback**' was one of the few US flicks that really kicked ass, and as if that wasn't enough it was also the 'Mother Raper' that launched the wave of Blaxploitation films in the Seventies. Hell . . . the debt to Big Daddy Himes has never been acknowledged by the pundits, I guess the time is plenty ripe to redress the balance and pay that clever devil his dues.

Like so many successful subversives, Chester Himes began his career with a hard stab at the mainstream. His first book, '**If he Hollers let him go**' (1944), was widely praised as a solid slab of gritty social commentary, but this acclaim didn't last too long. . . Himes seems to have had quite a talent for

Radical Chic cover from 'The Heat's On' circa 1969!





caricatures it as a cheap money spinning con aimed at ripping off poor folks from the Ghetto. 'Cotton' was inspired by his bitter belief that the Carvey thing was 'an opium pipe smokers dream . . . and perfect for a con'. Himes was no romantic revolutionary, he understood what motivated men like Malcolm X, but he could never see them as anything other than dangerously misguided. To him, their violence was like 'a blind man with a pistol', and violence was one thing he knew a lot about.

He was born in 1909 into the Black middle classes, both his parents were teachers, but his early years were scarred by a series of tragedies. His mother, whose volatile nature Himes seems to have inherited, used to carry a pistol around with her, that she wasn't afraid to use. She was light skinned enough to spend the night in the then segregated South in 'whites only' hotels, and would tell the management the following morning that she was Black, delighting in the uproar that ensued. After an incident when she threatened a white man with her pistol, Himes' father got the sack and the family was forced to move.

HIMES GETS SHAFTED

Work for a Black teacher was hard to find and Himes senior soon ended up waiting tables in a restaurant. Then Himes' elder brother Joe was blinded in a school accident in 1922 and the family moved again to Cleveland. They fared little better there and whilst working as a porter in a big local hotel, Chester Himes stepped into an empty lift shaft and nearly died from his injuries.

Doctors were convinced he would never walk again and the State Commission awarded him a \$75 a month total disability pension. he continued to receive this benefit even after he recovered. In many ways it was to change his life. Although by no means a fortune there were times when it kept him alive when he had no other source of income and it had the effect of distancing him from the no-income no-hoppers with whom he would spend so much of his life.

Himes created the figure of an old black janitor who also had this guaranteed income. In describing the man's bleak and sordid life, Himes makes clear the double-edged nature of this mealticket from the state. Just enough to keep him alive but not enough to let him live - it was just another of the many ironies in his life.

In the Autumn of 1926, he enrolled in Ohio State

Uni., using his \$75 to kit himself out in a coon-skin coat and Model T. He tried to fit into college life but couldn't stomach the 'Uncle Tom' attitudes of his black classmates. For a joke, he persuaded some respectable couples to accompany him to what turned out to be a Speakeasy. They told the college authorities and he was thrown out.

Then began Himes' bootlegging days at a Cleveland joint called Bunch Boys. He hung out with the bad men and served his 'Apprenticeship of Cool', smoking dope, running whores and driving flash cars. Eventually he was arrested for stealing a stash of guns and ammunition and it was only his mother's plea for leniency in front of a sympathetic judge that saved him from a jail sentence.

But soon he was back to his bad ways and was arrested again for using a false ID to cash cheques. This time he was given a two year sentence, suspended for five years. The threat of a long stretch inside seemed only to make Himes more reckless and before the year was out he was planning an armed robbery on a rich white family whose chauffeur he had got to know at Bunch Boys. The robbery was a disaster and, on the run from the law, Himes had the bad fortune to be stopped by a crooked fence in Chicago. He was tried, found guilty of armed robbery, and sentenced to 20 to 25 years hard labour.

SEVEN YEARS - HARD WRITING

In prison he found himself respected by the other cons on account of his education. His \$75 helped too, as it saved him from the drudgery of prison work and gave him a head start in the gambling circles that flourished in the prison and which he was soon running.

And it was in prison that he first started to write. The early stories were mostly based on his bootlegging experiences and he had several of them published in newspapers and magazines under the byline of 'Prisoner 59623'.

After serving seven years of the 25, Himes was paroled and soon married to Jean Johnson, another habitue of Bunch Boys. He decided that he would become a full-time writer, but until that happened he had to work as a full-time oddjob man, labouring on building sites and working in hotels. In 1943, Himes went to Hollywood with an introduction from **Langston Hughes**, famous poet of the 'Harlem Renaissance', to try his luck as a screenwriter. But

he was soon back to the oddjobbing and eventually a stint in the Los Angeles shipyards as a welder.

Bitter at his failure to make headway as a writer and made even more sore by his wife's success as a social worker, Himes poured all of his spleen into his first full length novel **'If He Hollers Let Him Go'** which was published in 1944. This story of an ambitious black shipyard worker falsely accused of rape by a white woman is the rawest book Himes ever wrote. Haunted by fear of failure and dreams of violent revenge, the main character Bob Jones, is only a very thinly disguised portrait of Himes himself. The book was published to cash in on the success of **Richard Wright's** earlier **'Native Son'**, but is an altogether angrier and bleaker piece, even his publisher described it as "a series of epithets punctuated by spit".

It was three years before Himes' next book, **'Lonely Crusade'**, appeared and with this one he really told it like it was. The reaction of critics and readers was almost universally hostile. Signings were cancelled without notice, he was dropped from radio spots and interviews and was accused of having betrayed himself and his former allies. Invited to give a speech at the University of Chicago the following year, Himes filled up with bennies and wine and proceeded to let rip at the comfortable middle class audience. They were afraid of the truth, he told them, they wanted the world of his books to reflect the way they thought things should be, not the way they really were. If his characters were mean, violent and nasty then that only reflected the world that made them that way and his duty was to tell the truth about it and not give false hope.

Predictably, the audience were not impressed and Himes left the podium with the sound of their silent hostility ringing in his ears. And so began what was effectively ten years in the wilderness for Himes. Over the next ten years he lived in Spain, London and France and had a variety of doomed affairs with a series of strung-out white women. He took heavily to dope and his extended drinking bouts led to long periods of total blackout. This self-destructive streak that he seemed to have inherited from his crazy mother reasserted itself, leading him, at one point, to throw into the sea the proof copy of a collection of his short stories that looked for a while like being his only chance of getting back into print.

SAVOURED BY THE FRENCH

His salvation came in 1955 following a chance meeting in Paris with Marcel Duhamel, editor of the famous **'Serie Noire'** series of crime books. Duhamel was an admirer of Himes' early work and tried to talk him into writing for the Serie. Himes wasn't keen and kept playing hard to get. But eventually Duhamel made him an offer he couldn't refuse - an advance of nearly \$1000, and Himes was off on the road that led, two years later, to the publication of **'The Five Corned Square'**, the book that came out later in the US as **'A Rage in Harlem'**.

It was as though Himes had suddenly found his voice, and for the next twelve years he produced a solid stream of Coffin Ed and Grave Digger Jones books, all marked by the same violent shifts of mood and apparently random plotting that had been so criticised in his earlier 'serious' books. But here the mixture worked a treat, and this was no would-be intellectual slumming-it to earn a fast buck by turning to the pulps. Himes took to the new genre like a toothless tramp to a bowl of soup. Almost with the first page of **'A Rage in Harlem'**, he sets out the terms for us with his description of classic long con called The Blow where a gullible straight "so square he had five corners", was persuaded, by a secret process that could turn ten dollar bills into

hundreds, to part with all his savings.

It's almost 50 pages before Coffin Ed and the Grave Digger make their first appearance, but when they do there's little time wasted on characterisation. "Colored folks didn't respect colored cops", we're told, "But they respected shiny pistols and sudden death". It was said in Harlem that Coffin Ed's pistol would kill a rock and that Grave Digger's would bury it."

For the next hundred pages or so the two cops follow a trail that snakes through Harlem, touching on a strange assortment of low-lives, crooks and fools as they go. On the way throats are vividly cut and Coffin Ed gets acid thrown in his face. By the end nothing has really changed. Through a mixture of graft, guns and guts the two cops have survived and that's about the best they can ask for. There are no 'solutions', no easy answers. Coffin Ed and Grave Digger are more like frontier marshalls on the rim of the lawless West than modern cops. A white cop describes them as "two Hog-farmers lost in the city." The Coffin Ed and Grave Digger Jones books are not detective books, nor police procedurals in the accepted sense of either genre. The crimes and the detection of them often seem to be following entirely different and random paths that intersect only by chance with inevitably violent results. The writing is dense and not afraid to shoot off at a tangent if it looks like an entertaining one. In their surreal effects and rapid cross-cutting the stories resemble most strongly the comic books of the forties and fifties and the low rent B-features that derived from them. It's interesting to discover that Picasso wanted to turn **'The Five Corned Square'** into a comic strip! Frank Miller - eat your heart out.

In all, Chester Himes wrote 8 Coffin Ed and Grave Digger books and a couple of other non-series crime books. Several of them were filmed, including **'Cotton Comes to Harlem'**, **'The Heat's on'** (*Come Back Charleston Blue*), and **'If He Hollers'** and there is no doubt that the rough, tough and surreally violent world of Himes' Harlem was a great influence on the whole course of the blaxploitation films of the 70's. All of the things that liberal (white) critics found unacceptable in these films - the violence, the savage caricaturing, the mendacity of the characters, the lack of 'plot' and the savage lurches from humour to horror are plainly evident in the books that Himes wrote.

However, he had little creative input into the films himself and in fact by the time the first of them, **'Cotton comes to Harlem'** had appeared in 1970, Himes had already written the last of his Harlem books. It was called **'Blind Man With a Pistol'**, the title echoing its author's belief that unfocused violence was the problem, not violence in itself.

The book ends on an unresolved note and the final echo of the two detectives came in the unfinished PLAN B, following a successful black uprising in the States, the Grave Digger is forced to kill Coffin Ed.

Chester Himes died in Spain in 1984 after a long illness. His books, though full of the flavour of their specific time and place, seem hardly to have dated at all. Several of the Harlem books are still in print and I hear a rumour that Dennis Hopper is to make a film based on Himes' life that draws on the Coffin Ed and Grave Digger books for its style. Well, I'll wait and see - but remember where you read it first!

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BOOKS

Hollywood Sex God, Bob Howard, Paarlament Books Inc., USA 1992

"The man who developed this drug is a medical genius," says a shaking scientist as he gingerly handles a new batch of Spanish Fly! Remember the swinging sixties - well here's a book that milks two of it's most culturally important concepts to the full. **Free love** and **Spanish Fly** get the pulpoid treatment in this tacky tale about an undercover cop, lured into 'stud duty' in a horned-up free love Commune.

The action is packed with 'frenzied broads', 'melon shaped buttocks' and other earthy delights. Our hero bares his soul in some telling asides 'I felt like a bull elephant in heat', 'My heart raced until it sounded like a gone drummer in a Jazz combo'. Literature at its finest. (A.O'F.)

Crepax, Diva Images, 1991
A load of old Crepax... and about time too. Little of the great man's work has been available for so, so long and this is some of his finest stylised 60s gear. There's colour shots, fashion plates, Grr-eat Ads and some fine, prime Crepax to be had in this exceptional volume. Deliriously perverted and soaked through with the carefree izing of Sixties decadence this is indeed a must see, must possess item, must sample extra large volume. Get it and be damned! (J.J.)

The Cosmical Horror of H.P. Lovecraft: A Pictorial Anthology. Diva Images, 1991.

Lovecraft gets the whammo zammo Diva treatment and what can you say except Oh Boy it's Mama Mia time! It's one mother of a glossy compendium that'll have Lovecraft fans crying into their wallets knowing they must have this pot pourri and homage to the thin man. There's plenty of rare stuff inside - comic, paintings and photo comics but the real highlight is the extensive bibliography and filmography. A true luxury.

Stanton and Lovecraft Volumes are 50,000 lire each (plus 10,000 lire postage) from the mighty Diva men at Glittering Images 11-13 Via Ardengo Soffice 50142 Firenze, Italy and Stateside from:

Prevue Magazine/
Supergraphics
PO Box 974
Reading,
PA 19603-4489,
USA.

Write for details of the sumptuous Crepax volume.

Blunder Broad: A Comic Serial by Eric Stanton, Diva Images, 1991.

Those Diva boys have done it again and whacked out some more glossy, high quality stuff! There's not much Stanton floating around these days; a few poorly produced Frenchy comic books, the superb 'On a Kinky Hook' comic and that's about it. **Blunder Broad: A Comic Serial** is a luxury item, sizzling Colour cover, pictures of Stanton the man tussling with some babes, and a busty Serial to boot. It's something that'll appeal to the big busts and scrappy gals fans, but may give diehard US and UK sleazo fans cold comfort.

With some luck now they've got one mighty Stanton Volume out, there may be some of his more raucously delicate work in the pipeline. Mmmmm Hmmm! **Blunder Broad** gives a hint of the greatness that is Stanton but it's not an item that would WOW those folk who are unfamiliar with some of his more glorious work. A specialist and well produced volume.



REVEALING FOLD OUT COVER ▶

Krista had been invaded and destroyed by a drunken step-father who could only think of his own needs.



GOREMETS cooking!



Vic Stanley interviews Gore Gazette editor Rick Sullivan

Rick Sullivan - 'Gore-met', wild man and bon vivant. A hero to some, a nightmare to others. For over a decade he's been helming **'The Gore Gazette'** the most compulsive and funloving guide to Gore, Sleaze and Z Grade flicks in the USA. Rick's no-bullshit, shoot from the hip approach is what makes the **'Gazette'** unique. But, it's also gained him more than a few enemies inside the Film biz. I guess that's the price you pay for refusing to run with the herd.

'The Gore Gazette' has been a prime mover in the world and Horror Underground and along with **'Sleazebop Express'** and **'Psychotronic Video'** it provides the definitive document of the sleazy, cheesy underside of Twentieth Century Culture. In the mid-eighties Rick took his love of Gore and Sleaze to its logical conclusion by becoming a mail order minister and setting up his own **'Church of Sleaze'**! It's not easy being an Evangelist, Prophet or Preacher bringing sleaze to the masses... it takes a dedicated guy to do it. Rick Sullivan is that type of guy.

Even if the past ten years have been turbulent ones for the 'G.G.', it's still going strong, and with the assistance of his loyal staff, it offers hot reviews, inside gossip, the beat from the street and a neat overview of the Horror film industry. But... **'The Gore Gazette'** is more than just

a collection of facts... it's an attitude. Vic Stanley's interview with America's Numero Uno Goremeister gives some insight into the warped mind, of it's editor... a real goddamn American Maverick (And a guy who doesn't avoid libel suits!).

Were there any signs of deviant behaviour in your childhood?

None at all! I was pretty much a model student. In fact, the only thing that may have been a little out of character was that I was once sent to a child psychologist because I had thrown a dart into the leg of a kid who squealed on me for copying homework from a pretty female student. Other than that, I had a normal childhood, good grades and no police record. I just had it in for this one little bastard who turned me in and I dated him.

The reason I maintained a devotion to Gore films throughout the years was because as a kid, I had a very strict mother who never allowed me to go to horror movies. In fact, when she found out that I read **'Famous Monsters of Filmland'**, she had this fucked up neighbor who said that I would grow up warped if she let me read those magazines. So, I watched tearfully at age 10 as my entire collection from 1962-1968 was given away at a church auction. I'm 35 years old and I never let my mother forget what she did. So it was like the forbidden fruit theory - what you can't have, you want that much more. Then I started cutting school to catch the double bills of horror films and never outgrew it because it was forbidden to me. Eventually, I was obsessed with horror, horror, horror! This cost me some relationships down the road in High School and College, but I didn't care. I was one of the only guys who would take a girl to the drive-in and would get pissed off when they didn't want to watch a particularly gruesome film rather than doing you know what!

Was there any further reaction to your interests from your family?

They didn't know about it until it was too late. Since I grew up in a rural area, it was no small feat to get away to the Grindhouses. It wasn't like they were right down the street. When I started High School, I came out of the 'Gore Closet' and declared to my mother "Look what you've spawned! I like nothing but horror movies! Hah!"

Work & Fun activities, most folks lead a double life. It's kind of schizophrenic. Was this your experience when you worked for Exxon?

Absolutely! I had to have a short haircut, and they constantly reminded me that if I fucked up in any way, there was a long line of college graduates waiting to get my job. At first, the mere mention of my tastes was immediately met with rejection and disdain, so it had to remain a Big Secret. When I used to zip off to 42nd St. for extended lunch hours to catch a sleazy movie, nobody knew about it. As far as they were concerned, it was one step above going to Show World (a porno theater) and jerking off! It definitely was a double life. When you work for Exxon, you are there for life, but you must conform to their standards. When they found out that the first few issues of **'Gore Gazette'** were produced on the premises entirely at their expense, I was through. Feb 9, 1983 - a day that will live in infamy. Sullivan chuckled out on the sidewalk with all his files. In hindsight, I can chuckle about it, but at the time it was like "Whoah! What am I going to do now?"

Did your abrupt termination mark the turning point in your career?

Since I had just been fired from a job that made me miserable for four and a half years, the experience motivated me to count my pennies, weigh my options and pursue something that I liked to do rather than what I was being groomed to do in college, and luckily, it panned out.

What do you do now?

I'm primarily a booker and accountant for independent movie theaters. I also own 2 small neighborhood theaters in New Jersey, which unfortunately for the sake of revenues, I must book with Walt Disney and other mainstream films. Any midnight shows I book are mainly for my own amusement since the people in the area aren't interested in my tastes.

Tell us about your Mail Order ministry degree?

In the summer of 1987, I was given 2 free tickets to Morocco. While waiting for my delayed return flight, the only reading material I could find in English at the airport was 'Soldier of Fortune' magazine. In the back was an ad for a \$25.00 mailorder ministry degree from the Universal Life Church, including diploma, membership card and vestments. This seemed too good to be true, but when I got home I sent for the package. Sure enough, it arrived as advertised. The clerical collar generated many sceptical reactions in bars and clubs, but I also discovered a great need for ministerial services like performing wedding ceremonies. So this became a sideline. Some 'Gore Gazette' readers have requested my services for their own weddings, and I have been flown to various parts of the country like Virginia to perform the ceremony. The groom, in this instance worked for the FBI and I thought it might be a setup! Ironically enough, the Universal Life Church is no longer recognized in Virginia. Whether or not it is because of me is anybody's guess. At least it is more respectable than Jim Bakker's or Oral Roberts' ministries. If a couple wants a serious ceremony, I do it serious. One couple wanted it to be done like 'Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure' so we did it that way. So far, I do about two dozen ceremonies a year. I don't charge a set fee except for expenses, although I do accept gratuities. It's more for a kick than the money and I don't do it to mock religion, rather for the experience. It was definitely \$25.00 well spent.

Growing older leads to Conservatism, have you gone in the opposite direction?

That's true. With my Exxon experience, the 'Great American Dream' kinda bombed out on me. You get good grades in High School to get into College, then you get good grades in College to get a good job. But when I got into Exxon, I thought 'My God! This is it? This isn't the kind of life I want to lead.' You're right. I guess I'm kind of a reverse Yuppie!

Tell me about your rock band - 'The Creeping Pumpkins'?

As a hobby, I've been playing in bands since I was 17. The drummer for **The Creeping Pumpkins** also plays in a popular college chart band called **The Peellies**, so this has helped with bookings and publicity. I play rhythm guitar and sing. I've been with the same guys since 1979 so far it's worked out OK. Our LP will be released this May on Albertine Records, which is an independent label based in New York.

What were the breaks and setbacks in starting 'Gore Gazette', particularly its recent near death experience?

Getting started for me was probably easier than for any other fanzine editor because I had that 'grant' from the Exxon Corp. Since it cost me nothing to produce, the first few issues were giveaways. I was surprised at how many other people shared my interests. Remember that, except for 'The Sleazoid Express', there were no other 'Gorezines' at the time. By the time I got fired, 'G.G.' was already pretty well established so I took a chance on making it a money making venture, at least to the break even point.

As far as the recent near death experience, after 10 years of people misunderstanding my sense of humor regarding racism, sexism, etc., in particular, the liberal newspaper, 'The Village Voice' blasting me, I had

enough. Because of all the bad press, the distributors weren't willing to carry 'G.G.' any more. Although it is a profitable venture, it is not my primary source of income, so I said "Who needs this bullshit?" After taking a few days to ponder the situation, I had a change of heart and I thought up the fictitious Nelson Mandela story to symbolize my unwillingness to buckle under to pressure. People are too sensitive with the feminism, sexism, racism etc. Whatever happened to White Trash rights? They are a long overlooked minority. It wasn't so much a financial disaster as it was the pressure from the self righteous special interest groups. They took the joke the wrong way.

The 'Village Voice' slammed the 'Gore Gazette', yet it's supposed to promote free speech?

You're so right on target in what you're saying! They are for freedom of speech as long as it involves the things that they support, like Gay and Lesbian rights, the environment, liberal politics, etc.. But if you're gonna support the First Amendment, you have to support it 100%.

It's as hypocritical as Sinead O'Connor, she praises 2 Live Crew and boycotts Andrew Dice Clay. That's right! If you're gonna be pro first Amendment, you gotta be 100%. I mean, Andrew Dice Clay is stupid, but once you start any kind of censorship, it snowballs. One of the great things about this country is that you have the right to be stupid. Once again, it goes back to White Trash rights. Whatever happened to 'em?

Music Censor Tipper Gore admitted to pot smoking in College. Do you think he also like the Grateful Dead?

Probably that and Sgt. Pepper and all that other music that ruined rock and roll. From personal experiences related through my fellow band member's record store, I can vouch for the fact that her efforts to expedite record labelling and censorship have been counterproductive. Any hint of a 'For Mature Listeners Only' label on a new release guarantees increased sales by at least 2,000 copies. The same was especially true in Florida with 2 Live Crew. Their record was bombing big time until all the controversy started. Now they've made Luther Campbell a millionaire. This was an even more perfect example of the futility of censorship than my Nelson



Rick in 'Jim Jones' mode

Mandela piece, and it was true! Too bad I was half in the bag when I was trying to articulate it! Like I said before, what you can't have, you want even more.

To what extent do you think musicians and film stars should become involved with political issues?

In my opinion, they should be separated as far as Church and State. Entertainment is Entertainment and Politics is Politics, and anybody who ever tried to mix the two ended being kinda fucked up either in their art or their politics.

Madonna, 2 Live Crew etc. touch taboo topics. How far do you think they should be allowed to go?

You could rattle off as many of these things as you want until you say "Hey wait a minute, that would offend me!" Maybe like a father fucking his own daughter up the ass or something like that, which I do not approve of. But then again, I'm glad I'm not in a position to dictate that kind of stuff because I don't want to say "Hey, enough is enough," because once you say that, you snowball into that censorship thing which is dangerous. So I'm kinda on the fence about it. Obviously, most people would have a much lower tolerance for offensive material than you or I would, but I don't know who should be in the position to say "Yeah, that's enough."

It seems like it's either the ultra right or the ultra left that wants to dictate what the masses should be exposed to, even though the silent majority has more of a 'live and let live' attitude than either extreme.

Yeah. Like kiddie porn offends me, but I wouldn't want to be the one to have to determine what is Kiddie Porn and what isn't. A 15 year old, Traci Lords, certainly didn't seem to be exploited when she was making her fuck films. She was cashing the checks herself, too.

What is the influence of music and cinematic violence on actual violence?

I think it's total bullshit. It's one of the most common questions I get asked. If you're aberrant, you're innately aberrant and any suggestions in rock music or any violence depicted on film is not gonna trigger that aberrance. It's in you and it's gonna come out whether it's today, tomorrow or whatever. I feel that they really don't have anything to do with one another. In fact, I read extensively on the Judas Priest trial case and it was obvious to me that those kids were messed up from the beginning.

It reminds me of the case of Ted Bundy. Much was said about the effect of violent pornography on Bundy, when in fact, they searched his car they found cheerleader magazines and Sears catalogs. So I guess pornography is in the eye of the beholder.

Sure! and then again, when he made his last ditch plea to get off Death Row, he used that angle - "Pornography made me do it!" Most people can keep that distance between fantasy and reality, and they're just going to see it for what it is. There's no consideration for the 99.9% of the population that isn't affected like that. It's just total bullshit.

Will the new NC-17 rating in the US allow for more graphic sex and violence in mainstream cinema?

Well, the only NC-17 I've seen so far is 'Henry and June'. I expected to see a little more graphic sex. If you compare it to films from the 70s like 'Shampoo', they're virtually the same. I thought it was a bit of a letdown. So far, the rating has pertained only to sexual content and nobody knows what effect it will have on violence on the screen.

Other than the guys in the band, tell me about your entertainment industry friends, enemies, traitors and most volatile personalities.

I have no friends in the industry except for one guy! The film industry is even worse than Exxon. They fire complete staff based upon the handling of motion pictures. Everybody is afraid and everybody rats on everybody else to save their own jobs. They're a spineless lot and I can't imagine for one second why anybody would ever want to work for a film company.

Without putting yourself at risk in any libel and slander suits, do you have any interesting anecdotes on film celebrities? In particular, you've made some uncomplimentary references to Frank Henenlotter in past issues of 'G.G.'
Oh, I don't care about that. Libel is my middle name.

Frank Henenlotter and I were very good friends. I met him when he started showing 'Basketcase' around New York. I thought it was a fantastic flick and we hit it off really well. He's very knowledgeable of film, but he had a very severe drug problem and is also a screaming I need drugs homosexual, which is fine. People tend to take me as the 'Andrew Dice Clay of Gore' but hey, homos are great! It leaves more women for me! But at one point in 1983, I rode a motorcycle to his house. I'll definitely hear from his lawyers on this one; He slipped me some acid, and then tried to tell me how great the Gay lifestyle is. Needless to say, I drove home tripping on a motorcycle through a thunderstorm and we haven't had any use for each other after that. Frank makes great movies. I thought 'Frankenhooker' was great, but if you wave bucks in front of him, he'll do anything. He'll bend and submit to cuts and edits that he wouldn't have in the past. But in his defense, I have been offered small amounts of money by film companies to give good reviews or provide ad space and have refused, but if I was offered thousands of dollars like they offer Frank, it might be different. But I don't think so.

On the subject of drug abuse, I've noticed that Tom Savini's name has also been mentioned in 'G.G.' Coke Fiend! At every single convention out here, he books himself, gets the advance money and never, ever shows up! I've met him a couple of times and he's strictly a coke fiend. Savini was one of my idols when I started 'Gore Gazette'. Nobody did special effects better than him, but he totally fucked up his life and he knows it, and he rips off these conventioners who pay to see him and it's just a goddamn shame. I recently hosted a convention in New Jersey where he was once again supposed to make a personal appearance. I read the riot act to the fans who spent \$15.00 to see him. "If you are here only to see Tom Savini, get a refund right now because he never intended to come, he's a total fuckhead and never again pay to see him because the poor guy just messed up his life." This really pissed off the conventioneer who was running the show. And it's only gonna get worse because now that he remade 'Night of the Living Dead', he's out in Hollywood and that is a real vicious, self destructive crew out there. This will have to be off the record but... aah, what the fuck... put it on the record. I don't give a shit! I know George Romero a bit, and although he publicly supported Savini in the press, he just thought the film was totally abominable. Romero is also very upset about the colorization of the original 'N.O.L.D.', but since it is in the public domain, there is nothing he can do about it. I'm obviously no angel myself. I've used drugs, but have never been an addict. My friends and I have kinda been drug free for two years now. It was making me stupid. I stopped drugs when I could no longer associate film titles with the film plots. Fun is fun, but this was affecting my living. Let this be a lesson to all you acolyte UGAWA! readers out there!

What is your assessment of the death of grindhouses and the advent of home video?

The death of the grindhouses is being caused by 80% home video and 20% crack. In the early 1980s, there was no such thing as crack or home video. It used to be that your average urban dude would spend \$5.00 on a movie and smuggle in a \$2.00 bottle of Thunderbird. Nowadays, he's spending \$10.00 on crack and he's all wacked out and doesn't go to the theater anymore. The grindhouses are closing like crazy and it's kinda like 42nd St. is no more. Even if a sleazy theater district erupts somewhere, it'll never be like it was because of home video and stuff.

What are a gorehound's worst nightmares and fears? I offer the examples of Vice President Dan Quayle and Phil Collins all-day on TV.

Those are pretty good! My worst fears would be for a major film company to actually allow Tony Timponi of 'Fangoria' to direct a movie, or to have somebody blow up the Blockbuster Video Corporate Headquarters and

leave my wallet there at the site of the rubble.

Elaborate on a subject near and dear to your heart as well as your groin - female gorehounds.

That's a rare commodity. There's not that many of them. Of all my 'Gore Gazette' subscribers, 92% are males, a large percentage of these being teenage boys who get off on the infantile humor. But the 8% that are Female Gorehounds, M M M M M, I love 'em! They're the best. It took 10 years to find them! We come across some in the music scene, but it's hard to find non-slut Gorehound babes. The females featured in 'G.G.', 103 are the pick of the litter and are definitely not sluts.


Have you any advice to aspiring fanzine editors: Give away as many copies as you can, but don't send free copies to Fanzine editors, because they consider it competition and if anything, they'll just say your 'zine sucks! Go directly to Fanzine Subscription Lists, although this may be difficult, since these same editors are very secretive. My files are always open, by the way, and are available upon request.

Future ambitions regarding possible expansion for G.G.?

Ideally, I would like to expand to a format like 'Psychotronic Video' magazine, but there are always limitations such as time and money. However, I do have a few surprises planned for the next few months. Be prepared!

What is the current state of the gore cinema in general?

Overkill. The big budget movies . . . there's no longer any new innovative way you can slice and dice or disembowel a body. And the low budget movies like the Herschell Gordon Lewis films that we used to get a kick out of, there's just zillions of 'em. It's just too much. I think it's gonna have to calm down, like there weren't any great horror movies in the late 1940s to early 1950s. I think we need a little bit of a rest.



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Rick lets Rip with capsule comments and opinions about famous cult directors, rival 'zines, picks his favourite tasteless flicks and fingers the most unintentionally funny film. Yowza!

Russ Meyer - "Great guy. Thinks of his wallet first, but has a tremendous sense of humor. One of the funniest guys I've ever met or talked to. If he loosened up and let a few moths fly from his wallet, he'd be a better guy and he probably would have done better for himself."

Alejandro Jodorowski - "A genius! One of the few guys who makes movies where you don't know from one minute to the next what the hell is gonna happen. he's arty, and I love the way he handles the press. I can't praise him highly enough. Never met him, though."

Dario Argento - "His stuff's nice to look at. I sometimes find wading through it a bit tedious, although he's been very good to the 'Gore Gazette'. I've sold more Dario Argento cassettes worldwide than anything! Thanks Dario for letting your videos fly out so loose!"

John Waters - "A pain in the ass! Made good movies 20 years ago. Kinda sold out to his audience and I think he'll be on Hollywood Squares in about 5 years."

Stuart Gordon - "Very, very nice guy who is a good, talented filmmaker that for whatever reason is bummed out over being typecast as a maker of horror

films. He co-wrote the screenplay for, and was supposed to direct 'Honey, I shrunk the kids', but when the Disney people found out about 'Re-animator', etc, he was paid off and replaced. After the release of the new version of 'The Pit and the Pendulum' you will find that Gordon really attempts to disassociate himself from the horror genre."

David Lynch - "I don't know him. Never was a big fan of his, thought he was overrated. Really liked his last two films, though. I wonder whether or not that whole 'weirdo' persona is a put on. Is he maybe just a slick, arty version of Joe Bob Briggs?"

Clive Barker - "I never was a fan of his fiction. His praise is a little overblown because a lot of his stuff is lifted from EC comics. He's like the British Steven King. They're alright, but their originality leaves much to be desired."

Troma Studios - "Well... they suck! Heh, Heh! They don't pay people. Young filmmakers - stay away from 'em! Lloyd Kaufman and Michael Herz are only interested in becoming millionaires. You know I sued them, right? They asked me to see a screening of 'Splatzer University'. I told them 'There's nothing I can say publicly about this movie. It really blows, so I'm not gonna say anything.' But when they printed their posters, they said 'Most terrifying film of the year!' - Rick Sullivan/Gore Gazette. When I called them to complain, they said 'What the hell do you care? You just got a million dollars worth of publicity!' So I sued 'em. I didn't win because the judge threw it out of court. But at least I got Troma to take it off the poster."

Cinefantastique - Used to be my Bible, but they're a little too technical. I don't want to know the Starship Enterprise's license plate number.

Psychotronic Video magazine - Weidon's a Genius. I wish I had the time, devotion a facilities to put together something the way he does. However, in light of recent things which have transpired, I am a little disappointed with him. I'm going to have to speak to him and we'll see. I think Michael Weidon can be bought. If that's the case, he sucks a big dick, but that's a topic for future study.

It's Only a Movie - at first I thought that stuff wasn't too good, but the publication's getting better. Michael Flores leaves a lot to be desired personally for me because he sells my trailer compilation tapes as his own. I'm not a Hercules by any means, but if I saw him I wouldn't know whether to shake his hand or kick him in the balls.

Film Threat - Pretty funny. Chris Gore kinda gets balled up in the same thing with me. I like what he does. He has a good sense of humor and stuff like that.

He sent me a copy of his film "Ouchi", over the holidays, but I haven't gotten a chance to watch it yet. Chris Gore's OK in my book, even though I've never met him.

Best Cannibal Atrocity film - 'Make Them Die Slowly', without a doubt. **Best Mondo film** - 'Mondo Cane'. In the light of the fact that most recent mondo films are basically fake, I have to go with the one that affected me the most as a kid in 1962. Although it's fairly mild by today's standards, at least it was genuine and a trendsetter. But those 'Faces of Death' films are really fake. Anybody who comes to New York can meet the Black guy who was supposedly electrocuted in the first 'Faces of Death'. His name is Sam and he's an elevator operator at the Selwyn Bldg., where Aquarius Releasing, who distributed the film, is located. He was given \$40.00 and all the liquor he could drink. It was shot on a weekend in upstate New York. A lot of that stuff is fake and bullshit, and should be pointed out. All of these phonies should be exposed.

Best Necrophilia film - 'Nekromantik' was a little too arty for its own good. I got a kick out of the 1972 film 'Love Me Deadly' starring Lyle Waggoner who also starred on the 'Carol Burnett Show' and 'Wonder Woman'. It's about a necrophiliac club. You have to see it to believe it.

Best new Mainstream film - 'King of New York' or 'Goodfellows'.

Best Underground film - 'Fingered' by Richard Kern. Some of that stuff... Those guys are a little too nihilistic and don't get enough sun in my opinion.

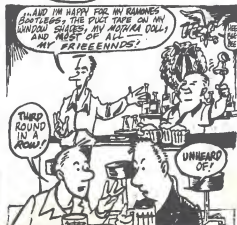
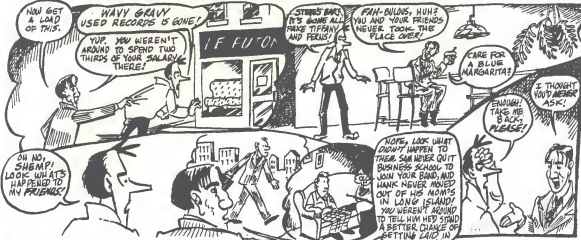
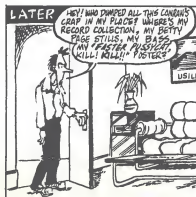
At least Nick Zedd remained true to his art by dying.

Yeah, I mean they're troopers, but 'Fingered' at least has a pretty deranged sense of humor. I like that one a lot.

Most Unintentionally funny film - 'The Rookie' starring Clint Eastwood and Charlie Sheen. It's supposed to be an 'Old Cop - Young Cop' chemistry thing, but Charlie was heavily into drugs at the time and he was fucking his lines up. He looks terrible in the movie and Clint Eastwood, who directed the picture, took him aside and beat the shit out of him during production and told him "This isn't how we make movies!" It's a terrible movie to begin with and you can even see toward the end of the movie when the two characters are supposed to click, that they hate each other's guts. Neither one of them is good enough in the movie to disguise the fact that they cannot stand one another. So I was cracking up when I was watching it. During the scenes where Charlie Sheen gets beat up, I was wondering what was special effects and what was Clint Eastwood actually kicking his ass all over the soundstage.

IT'S A WONDERFUL LOWLIFE

By Jim Ryan



the Weird World of BLOWFLY

In the beginning he was soulman Clarence Reid, a sweet voiced guy who penned hits for *Betty Wright*, *Sam and Dave*, *Wilson Pickett* and 70s funksters *K.C. and the Sunshine Band*. But when darkness fell he'd mutate, slip into his snazzy costume and become super bad *Blowfly*.

As *Blowfly*, he immersed himself in the taboo topic of sex . . . sure, Black Artists had been doing triple 'X', risqué 'party' stuff for years, but *Blowfly* was something different. He was a real twister, a funky pervert who turned squeaky clean chari-toppers into full blast raunchy epics. Nothing was sacred while he was around, and Mama Mia! what he did to *Sinatra*, *Tom Jones* and *The Beatles* defies description.

In the sixties and Seventies he released a dose of albums on the *Weird World* label, all full of songs, adverts and rapping that makes *2 Live Crew* sound like a mess of wimps. By the end of the Seventies he'd begun to stretch out musically and get high powered and funky, he cut classic stuff like *Rapp Dirty* and *Fresh Juice*. Since then he's gone from strength to strength with records like *Blowfly for President* and the freshly released *Twisted World of Blowfly*. Now that Rap and obscenity is big news perhaps his chance at the bigtime has finally come.

How do you explain a guy like *Blowfly*, the simple answer is - you can't. You sit back, listen and let him tell it in his own way. *Blowfly* is *Blowfly*. You can't keep this good guy down, he doesn't just explain his songs, he does them! So look out as *Blowfly* rips through his life story, reveals his modus operandi and gives you tasty snippets of his whacked out repertoire. Mmmmm, a real treat.

Cotton picking and Hillbilly music

I grew up in a little town called Cochran, Georgia, it was a real small country town. And at a young age my mother, along with my grandmother, moved to another town called Vienna, Georgia. That's close to Macon and Hawkinsville. That's where I used to work in the fields. I used to go to school, and after school I used to have to come home about 2.30 or 3pm, I'd get into my overalls in the field and pick cotton and wheat and all of that stuff. And then my mother moved to Miami in another little small town with my grandmother. Finally, things got so bad I had to quit school and help my grandmother to work.

On Saturday it cost a dime to go to the movie. All the rest of the kids would go upstairs to the movie, and I'd go back to a spot called Bulldog Saloon. Nothing but a bunch of Rednecks, but they played the piano there - they were the only White club around, there was a couple of more Black clubs, but I liked the Hillbilly music, it somehow rocked me. It played better than the Black stuff.

So that's how I got interested in music. This white dude would always ask me what the Hell I'm doing there. I forget his name, and he was real mean, but his bark was worse than his bite; 'cause he would ask me what I'd want, and I would tell him Rock Candy - Superman used to come on "*Rock Candy Bar with the Adventures of . . . Superman*". And I'd ask him how to make a few chords and stuff and he'd show me on the piano, then he'd say - "Get your little ass outta here. Black kid's got some nerve, ain't he, coming in here. On you go."

I grew up listening to Hillbilly songs. To me it was the best music, it always made sense. It always had a good story behind it and a good hook in it. About that time they had a crazy song that went:

*I was looking back to see
if you were looking back to see
if I was looking back to see
if you were looking back at me.*

That made a lot of sense. The Blacks thought it was stupid, but to me it made sense.

My first job

So I ended up running away and hitchhiking to West Palm Beach, and I started working in the cafeteria washing dishes. But although I could make more money at the cafeteria. I wanted to work in the Juke Box place because that was my music. So I quit the cafeteria and went in the Juke Box place. And I would make up songs and sing them while I'm stacking records, old records that come off the juke box and been worn out, I'd stack them.

And Mr Hunter would come through and ask me "What the heck is that?" I'd say "That's a record I made up" - "Oh sure, sure." Finally, he realised that I actually wasn't lying, I did write those songs. He gave me an address of a guy named Henry Stone, which later on became a good friend of mine. When I came to Miami I looked up Henry, and Henry, he said, "Sure, I like your songs, you're going to be a big star," and put me in the warehouse. Again stacking records, making \$20 a week, working six days a week.



the
**Blowfly
Story as
told to
Moose
McGill**



Blowfly Party 70s style

Cutting records: My first rap

This was around '59 or '60, I would go to Mike Emmerman, he's now head of a big studio called Criteria. At that time it was just a two track or a one track, I can't remember. But I'd go there and happily clean up. He told me if I cleaned up for a month he'd give me a free session. And I did. So he said "You can cut anything you want, but I'm not paying for the musicians." I went in and cut this thing we called 'Oddballs', which was a rap. It was back in '62 or '63.

*Somewhere in this land
a woman and a man
sneaks into a wood.
I bet they're up to no good
Why, nobody knows
That's where they goes
Where the woods are thick
'cause that's where they get their kicks*

It was about two hippies

*Seems very odd
you can hardly tell 'em apart
'cause they both wear beards.
Sure is weird.
Seems very strange
they're both wearing rings
with a bitchery mitch and a guy named
Snitch.
But which one is which?*

That's why they call them the Oddballs.

So I took it and played it to Henry. They said it was the worst piece of shit they'd ever heard. They wanted me to sing, not to talk. Then ten years later, here comes the Sugarhill Gang with:

*Hotel, motel, Holiday Inn
If your girl stands acting up, then you
take her friend . . .*

And all that kind of shit.

Then they said, "Didn't you have a record like that?" I said sure we did and it became "Rock Dirty." 'Cause then they found I'd been there, it was:

*"Lois Lane, she ain't no better
She gives Superman head while she's
sittin' on a sweater."*

My first records as Clarence Reed

As Clarence Reed I had a big record, it was bigger than Blowfly, and Blowfly was like under the table! I had a Top Ten

record on Billboard charts and Cash Box. It was called 'Nobody but you Babe' and that was distributed by Atlantic.

Of course, later on in the '70s, Blowfly took over and Clarence Reed became secondary. So Clarence Reed played a lot of local clubs around here. But as Blowfly, the first club I ever appeared in was the Twenty Grand in Detroit.

The origins of Blowfly and the Weird World record label

I would get on the piano after work and I would sing dirty songs for the girls, you know . . . 'Shittin' In the Dock of the Bay' and all that stuff. But before I'd do it, I'd sing a song:

*It's a Weird World, full of weird people,
everything is weird and strange.*

Yeah!

*A Weird World, full of weird people,
the world is going to the dogs.*

Something like that. So, we came up with the idea of calling it 'Weird World', you know, like my own personal label. Nobody never was on it 'cept but me. Other than a guy named Butterball. That was the title of a song I had and that's how Weird World came about.

My grandmother actually came up with the name Blowfly. She called me that because I couldn't tell my mother, you know, my mother would kill me. But my grandmother, me and her was like that, I could tell her anything. So I'd sing my dirty songs to her, and she would say "That's true, Junior, and you should be a Blowfly." I finally looked up what a Blowfly is later on and found out that it's something that lays eggs that turns into maggots that feeds on dead things.

My costumes

I got the original costume from a girl I was dating named Regina. She came up with the idea, because I liked to attract her so much. She said I should get a split tail tuxedo, and she created the cape and everything, you know. And it really made an impact on stage.

And of course, later on in the '70s, the young girls like to see you dressed a little more flashy and stuff. So Beau and Lydia got together and sent me to this gay guy that created a new outfit which fits tight - you know! I always kept my figure and stuff, 'cause I never gained my weight, I'm very active so it shows off my body and everything like that. There was this cape, and this silver and gold and stuff, real flashy.

It brought a lot of freaks in. Now, when I go out there girls send me pictures of themselves naked, huh, huh, huh, with the cunt open and all kinds a shit!

I wear my costume a lot

That's right, in California Jimmy, my manager, don't like me to go along there without at least wearing the mask, 'cause they say, that's the symbol. And they like it. Problem is, it's good for him,

but bad for me, 'cause I never can get any place and come back in a hurry, I always gotta stop, sign autographs, sign a record, then they'll go and ask you a thousand questions - how big is your dick . . . I hear you like white girls, or black . . . who do you fuck the most, and all that kinda shit. And they be serious! You have to help them - it sounds stupid, but they really want to know.

People figure they can ask the Blowfly anything. I had me an interview with Al Goldstein. He was the weirdest! I ain't used to TV interviewers asking me on TV how old I was when I started masturbating. Heh. I had to get my shit together in a hurry. How long is your dick and all that shit.

Al Goldstein, he's got this young, beautiful chick, that weighs about a hundred pounds, and he weighs about eight hundred. Boy, what a combination. But that's my friend, though.

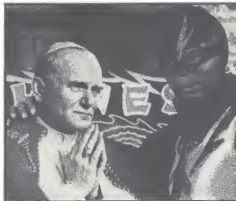
The twisted songs of Blowfly

It just seemed to me that everybody could get a hit. I seen people with no talent at all would have Top Ten records. And I think I was much talenteder than them, and I couldn't get, as Lydia says, Jack Shit going. So out of revenge I'd take the songs and fuck them up, like:

*When somebody fucks you
It's no good unless they fuck you
All the way.*

and 'Blue Moon', I do:

*Blue Balls
Yep yep yep Bom,
Shananana, shanana,
Blue Balls . . .*



Blowfly & Italian Fan

And, uh, with 'The Land of a Thousand Dances', I fucked with Wilson Pickett, he didn't like it too much.

*You got to fuck the pony
Like Bony Marony.
Fuck the alligator . . .*

All that stuff.

My favourite comedians

My favorite by Redd Foxx was the horse race, you know:

*A Crabbe, A Crabbe, is riding my
dick,
It's from the Blue Ointment stable . . .*

and that kind of jazz.

And Moms Mabley, I actually



Blowfly wears 60s style

performed with her. I really admire **Moms Mabley** and **Pigmeat**. They was funny without being nasty. Anyone can be nasty, and put Women down, but you have to be funny with it you know. And nothing's more funny than singing a song you know and the lyric's been changed.

Rudy Ray Moore . . .

We used to watch his movies, **'Dolomite'** and the **'Human Tornado'** and stuff at the drive-in. We had the drive-in movies, you know, get in the car, take your girl and go in the movie, drive-in, hanky panky and watch it. And funny thing, watching horror movies and everything else you could always play around with the girl's thighs and shit, and pay the movie some attention. But when you're watching Rudy Ray Moore's movie, you forget about all the girl in the car with you, it's got to be Motherfucker this and Sonofabitch that, and all that kind of stuff.

Actually, I was doing it before him, you know, I cut my first record in 1962, but they had their s released first.

I did a tour with Rudy Ray Moore, Redd Foxx, Aunt Esther and Wild Man Steve. They started off by having me opening the show. I don't know why, I would draw a lot of young people, and a young white crowd. I don't know why. An after I would leave off singing, a lot of the crowd would leave out, the younger set. So the promoter said, No, he can't open the show, we've got to have him like, uh, co-starring, so the young people would stay. 'Cause most of them told jokes, and I got up and sang with the band, and I rapped, plus I would do a little bit of stand-up, so that was great.

It ain't like I thought it was going to be - on the road I thought everybody would be tight and closed, but it's dog eat dog! We would go to the club, in the first two nights the band was together, Steve, Aunt Esther and Redd Foxx said "Yeah, Blowfly, don't worry about it, it's going to be cool."

But after the first week when the band got tight, and I wanted to kick ass, than it all changed, Hmmmhmm. All of a sudden it wasn't no buddy-buddy no more. You know - you're staying on too long with that stuff. And the promoter said no, he's a number one number, the crowd you know, they had to have more numbers on my show, and when they heard that it made certain people mad. They reviewed it a lot you know.

Blowfly and the Pixies

I was at the Universe Theatre, the Pixies, I was on the show with the Pixies. That was beautiful. You know, the Pixies, they like given a build-up like they was Frank Sinatra or the Beatles or something. What was so weird, they had heard of me, 'cause they called Lydia and them up and I hadn't never heard of the Pixies, I didn't know they was like that big. But a lot of crowd came there, and then when I saw Jimmy's daughter, which is a good friend of mine, she's 15, and I saw a lot of her friends there, 15 and 16 year old little girls, I said - "Holy Shit! How am I going to do this?" And the Pixies were worried too, but they loved it, I went on, I was really funny, they really loved it.

The Pixies came to my dressing room, I ended up giving them up. They ended up stealing my boxed sets from me. Anyway, it was gone, they got a boxed set from me and some of my records. But that was big, big top billing, and the crowds loved it, and they called us back on, it was good. I'd do it with a seven piece band and dancers, I had dancers also.

I'm working next Tuesday with George Clinton in New York! The Palladium. I know those guys from way back. The Funkadelics, and all of them know me. They're real funky, real good.

My records

The first LP I did for Pandiscs was **Fresh Juice**, that was a big seller. And then the second one for Pandiscs was **Electronic Banana**. Then it was **Temple of Doom**, then **Blowfly on Tour '86**. There was **Blowfly's Freak Party** and then it was **Blowfly for President**. The new album, the soundtrack from the movie, **'The Twisted World of Blowfly'**.

I must of had about thirty of them out with **'The Weirld World of Blowfly'**, I can't remember all of those hits: **'Blowfly of Tour'**, **'Blowfly at the Movies'**, **'Oldies but Goodies'**, the **'Rock Dirty'** thing and a whole slew Rapping, Dancing and Laughing.

Blowfly on celluloid!

I got my movie. It's called **'The Twisted World of Blowfly'**. I did it about two years ago, they're thinking of putting it out around August. And Ron and Lydia and the company have just released the soundtrack from the movie.

The Movie - it's got a concert, but it's what leads up to the concert that's what's funny. I get off the Lear jet in New York's funny, with my midget as my bodyguard and stuff, put a curse on my dick - "See if I don't change, my dick had gone far off." And it do comes off, I mean the girls and the midget chases it down Hollywood Boulevard.

It's real fun. All of this leads up to the concert. Then at the climax I do the concert on air, full-fledged concert. Unlike a Richard Pryor movie, where they say "And now we have Richard Pryor" and he comes on, you know, tells

jokes, and when he's through telling jokes the movie's over. I do a lot of things that leads up to that, with all the women and stuff - in bed, then there's a shower scene where they see my big 42" dick on the wall. Got a girl, laying on a bed, and any normal person would just get on top of her and fuck her. But, not **Blowfly** - Look, there's butt plugs and dildos, and KY jelly, and finally I end up with an electric drill with a dick on it, and I attack her with it.

It was real funny. She was a Barbara Walters lookalike, her name was Barbara Alters - she's very shy, she questions me and I talk about the Pope and everybody, it's funny. 'Cause it's switch from one thing to another, you know, I'm always doing some shit.

And I want to stick a corncob up a girl's butt, and you see a little dog goes downstairs, and you can see him coming upstairs, bringing me the corncob. That's funny. You don't see no contact, you know, like I'm actually doing it, but you get the point of what I'm trying to do.

Jimmy Maslin, my manager, he used to be the road manager for Jackie Wilson, and he owns the movies **'Blood Feast'**, **'Wizard of Gore'** and all those old gore movies from the '60s.

I've always wanted to get into the movies thing, because I got this acting ability, all my life I've been an actor. I been had to put on a front to get this, or to get that, and when I do Clarence Reed I gotta act like a classy, shy kind of guy - actually that's me normally. And when I do **Blowfly** I gotta be the dirtiest sonofabitch in the world, who don't give a fuck about nothin'. So all that stuff's a part of acting.

So I was very proud when I did this movie. And the second movie's supposed to be **'Blood Feast 2'**, a remake of **'Blood Feast'**, Jimmy's going to direct it. I think I play one of the main parts. I kill other people. To bring this queen back to life you need an arm from this virgin girl, and a leg from that one, and shit from that one, until you make up the whole girl . . . and that way you bring back the Egyptian queen or somethin'. Anyway, it should be great.

Do my family like Blowfly?

My grandmother was fine. My mother didn't like it, but she finally told me that: "Hey, Clarence Junior, (that's what she called me), you ain't never drank, you never smoked, and you never do drugs."

So, what do I do? I do **Blowfly**. You know, if I go to Hell for that, I just go to Hell. But there's a lot of worse people. I know a lot of spiritual gurus, I won't call them by name, but they're real big. They smoke pot, and they drink, and they do all kinds of shit. But I always said, if you hear me, as **Blowfly**, sayin' "I'm saved!" I'm totally religious. I won't read no other books, I won't curse no more." I figure you can't be in the middle, you can't play with God, you know, either This way or That way.

Blowfly and Girls!

It's always been easy for me to pick up girls, but I wouldn't use them like others do. Girls used to come in the house, and I'd be inside trying to get them to sing. This was before **Blowfly**. They find that I can always pick a girl with a horrible voice; not that I was that big a genius and the rest of it, I had more patience. Girls, you hafta got to be very patient, because they're temperamental - they come to rehearse with a period on - and you have to find what the fuck is wrong with them. If you're not patient you can blow it. So I was always very patient with them, so I got a lot out of them.

A lot of girls I was with, and then slept with on the road, and then tested. You know I've never been the aggressive type that just wants to fuck every girl because I know I could, it has to be

somebody that I really care for. Just because I'm **Blowfly**, they think I've got to hang my dick in everything that moves.

Advice to UNGAWA! readers

I once had a record, "I may give out, but I refuse to give up!" That is the key to it, in getting what you want. You can't quit, you got to stick at it.

Main thing is, you know you're right about what you're doing, 'cause time changes, and you have to be able to change with the times, without prostituting your own thoughts and yourself.

I'm the type of guy - like all of the artists out there, I know I'm not the richest artist out there, nowhere near that. But I'm probably the happiest of them, because it don't take too much to

make me happy.

Other music you like?

Well... I used to just like love songs, and R & B, and a few Hillbilly, but being around two chicks named Likkin' Lydia O'Jeda and Raunchy Rona Raw Saxon, I'm beginning to get into Hard rock now. I'm going to get an acid rock band, you remember the song "We will, we will rock you"? I'm going to do it "We will, we will Fuck you". Like a hard rock thing!

Plans for the future?

I'm working on setting me up a tour, and I think I'll get some young rapheads to be on the tour with me, since I draw a younger audience anyway. Either that or a rock band, 'cause that's the kind of crowd I draw: those rowdy white kids with no shirts and stuff, it's great.

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SEX · RELIGION · DEATH

Freaks (1932) is a film that shocks and tantalizes. It's one of those films that make you want to return to watch it again and again. Why? The normals in it are a little dull, obvious and unattractive. It's the *Freaks* that compel and appeal. They are sweet, interesting and intriguing. It is part of the nature of freakdom, I guess to make you want to keep looking, to keep returning to find out more.

Johnny Eck, who died recently, was one of the most famous freaks in the world, famous in the sense of being well known. His part in *Freaks* made him an instantly recognisable figure. What was Johnny like? All that most folks know is that he was a half man, a torso - a human oddity. In most obituaries he was described as a happy freak; not much of an insight and hardly an adequate description. It's time to redress the balance and get a flavour of what Johnny was about. In this unique, poignant piece, Jack Stevenson draws a portrait of the man as a three dimensional guy. A man born in an earlier time with earlier sensibilities, in short someone that most people would have liked to have known.

"MAJOR IS NOW SUNNING HIMSELF AT THE WINDOW," writes Johnny Eck, world famous freak and showman, on a clear, cold day in October of 1986. Major was his pet chihuahua.

"Soon I will be firing up our wood-coal burning furnace. I love to start the fire and watch the heavy logs burn. The flames flickering, the delicious smell of woodsmoke. (I dream I am in the country in an old farmhouse! And I am at peace with the world and happy!!)"

Outside Johnny's rowhouse windows in rough East Baltimore awaited anything BUT the peaceful, pastoral scenes that fed his imagination in his old age. Once a lower working class white neighbourhood, it had become predominantly black, the scene of soaring crime, drug addiction and poverty. Johnny's house was easy to spot, its original frontage and coloured glass panels crowded on each side by newer facades. It was here that Johnny had been born, one hot August night in 1911. And

here that he would die in his sleep at the age of 79, his last years spent in dire poverty, a virtual prisoner in his cramped two storey rowhouse and tiny barricaded backyard.



He slept on a broken, rotted sofa, covering the broken springs with layers of old rugs. Hot water for the occasional sponge bath had to be laboriously heated on the stove. Johnny's twin brother Rob slept in the unheated back room, his lifelong companion, assistant and straightman now suffering from deteriorating eyesight. In the notorious Baltimore summers the place was like an oven. Johnny sorely lamented the fact that he was so ill prepared to offer guests and visiting fans any kind of decent hospitality.

Johnny's death on January 5th of this year (1991) went unnoticed until a small error-laden obit. appeared in the February 4th issue of *VARIETY*... the tiniest block of type on two massive pages announcing the deaths of bit-players, B-stars and technicians. It was a sad and quiet ending to a life and career that had been anything but.

Johnny's childhood was a happy one, cared for as he was by his loving parents, his twin brother Rob, and his older sister Caroline. He was treated as something of a celebrity here on Milton Avenue in the Highlandtown neighbourhood of East Baltimore. Born with no lower body, only a torso, he soon learned to walk on his hands. He became the star of the schoolyard as fellow classmates fought for the honour of carrying him up the steps.

Originally his mother had notions of a career in the Ministry for him. Johnny would practice the part, entertaining guests to the Eckhardt home with his 'fire-and-brimstone' sermons. He would climb atop a small box to rail against drinking, damning sin and the Devil. On one such occasion he unintentionally mortified his mother by taking up an offering and collecting 65 cents. "That ended my ministry" he dryly recalls.

Though brighter than most of his classmates, Johnny's life choices were obviously limited by his handicap. A chance to join the carnival early on gave him the opportunity to travel, to perform, to make multitudes of friends and to contribute to the ever strapped Eckhardt household. Rare opportunities for a mere boy. And he loved it!

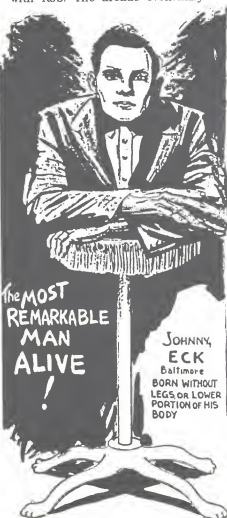
Johnny performed with Ringling

Brothers, Barnum and Bailey, the Great Shesley Shows and with many carnivals. His acts over the years included animal training, feats of strength, magic, 'trick pictures', acrobatics, juggling, trapeze and much more.

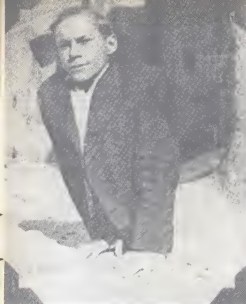
In 1931, Johnny - still 'the Boy Wonder' - and a cast of other freaks shot the MGM Todd Browning-directed classic *'Freaks'*, on a studio lot in Culver City, California. While this was to be Johnny's main claim to movie fame, the studio also utilised him briefly in *'Tarzan the Apeiman'*, which was being shot at about the same time. In that movie Johnny was costumed as some sort of hideous prehistoric bird creature!

Johnny and Rob had their own dance band in the late Twenties and early Thirties, *'The Red Phantom Dance Band'*. Johnny on alto sax, Rob on piano and organ. Johnny also conducted a 12-piece orchestra in Baltimore during the off season. At one point he bought his own Chrysler limousine and had friends drive him around the city streets. He drove a midget race car at 60 mph in all the big Southern state fairs as well.

After retiring from the showman's life in 1940, he ran a Penny Arcade with Rob. The arcade eventually



THE
JOHNNY
ECK
STORY



Johnny in Freaks youthful, charming, sophisticated

went bankrupt and they later bought a miniature train ride which they operated at parks and church picnics. Johnny drove the train and delighted in the joy of his young passengers. Eventually they were forced to shut down the ride, however, as teenagers would gather to jeer and stone them.

Johnny, in later life, was primarily known in Baltimore as a gifted screenpainter in the local folk art tradition. As a boy he had studied oil painting and drawing at the neighbourhood studio of William Octave, and he would go on to design much of his own circus promotion. He also became skilled in woodworking.

Throughout the Seventies and Eighties, he was often to be found holding court out on his front stoop with Major by his side. From this much photographed vantage point he would cheerfully engage friends and passersby. Little children were his favourites, and Johnny relates in a letter how the little neighbourhood girls would plead for permission to dress Major up in doll clothes, but that was a no-no!

Johnny remained, up until the very last years, the same kind, optimistic and flamboyant personality that had won fame and friends among a different generation of the 20s and 30s.

He was an ardent storyteller. A lifetime spent as circus performer and centre of attention - both wanted and unwanted - had nurtured a dramatic streak a mile wide. Johnny was ever the dreamer, the exaggerator, the embellisher extraordinaire. His letters overflowed with a thousand exclamation marks amid a rush of 'show-stopping' declarations, and his imagery ranged from the poetically idyllic to the hellish. If a story took place at night, it always began at 'midnight', nothing ever

happened at 10 or 11 o'clock. Johnny's voluminous correspondence over the years reveals the 'old world' sensibility of a man of his generation. There is a keen wit and a firm grasp of detail that is, however, eternally prone to getting ploughed under in the avalanche of dramatic exaggeration.

Johnny always saw himself as something of a cultured, sophisticated gentleman.

In the early Eighties, renowned cartoonist R. Crumb, drew a full page illustration plate of Johnny on stage tipping his 'crown' to an audience of abashed gawkers. The cartoon was commissioned by a friend of Johnny's, who planned to publish Johnny's never-to-be-realised biography. While Johnny proudly transplanted his cartoon likeness onto his personal stationery, he rejected the illustration as a possible cover to the proposed book as he disdained to be pictured as a comic book character. Rather, he wished to be portrayed as a 'rather sentimental person, a person of sensibility... not a jester...'

Johnny's attitude in this respect set him apart from his fellow freaks on the set of Browning's movie. He remained distant from them, preferring instead to spend his time associating with the 'big stars' of the film like Victor, Bacalanova, Hyams and Daisy and Harry Earles. If not in their company, he was to be found fraternising with the writers of technicians, or with Todd Browning himself, who insisted Johnny be at his side whenever possible.

"To put it mildly," Johnny remembers, "they (the other freaks) were a happy, noisy crowd. And I was bent on being sophisticated. I really didn't relate with that crowd of freaks. I just couldn't mix with them. They were childish, silly and in a world all their own."

Generally speaking, though, Johnny got along well with his fellow performer folk. He recalls with pride all the famous freaks he met in carnivals and circuses. In fact he preferred their company to that of normal people as they never asked each other 'embarrassing questions'. Johnny was a man of propriety and clearly offended by the inane, silly and far too personal questions his 'fans' would badger him with.

He could never forgive or forget certain episodes of unkind or hysterical treatment received at the hands of 'normals' over the many years. Johnny recalls one such incident when he was young that occurred inside a major department store during the Christmas Holidays.

"I was wearing an expensive brown leather jacket generously trimmed and covered with brown fur. By

misake, I approached an upcoming escalator and as the lady's head looked over the landing she spied me and her hand touched my fur coat. she screamed, "Christ! It's a wild bear! Help! Police!" And this 299 pound woman threw up her arms in the air and toppled back on the crowd fighting to get up the stairs! Someone touched the emergency button and stopped the escalator. I took one look at that tangled mass of humanity on the stairs and got the hell out of that store promptly. I have never been in a public place like that since."

Though obviously painful to him, Johnny could see the black humour in scenes like this. In fact his own sense of humour could run to shades of black, as exemplified by the 1930s era photograph taken of him and a friend in a junk yard, sprawled in a wrecked car simulating accident victims - Johnny cut in half!

Johnny's last years were not so funny. Plagued by a hated neighbour referred to pseudonymously in letters as 'Gaffer', Johnny's repugnance for the elderly black man became overwhelming. He claims Gaffer taught his young daughter to spit on him. Gaffer was an ex-murderer from West Virginia. Johnny told a correspondent in February of 1986, "dangerous, demented, childlike, crazy... and just plain nuts!"

In a generally upbeat published profile of Johnny at the time, the interviewer concludes with an innocent question: What would Johnny do if he could be a full human being for a day? "I'd get my brother's baseball bat," he replies, "and beat the hell out of that sonofabitch next door who makes our lives so miserable!"

Johnny's hatred of the reviled Gaffer drove him to voodoo.

"I know we gave those rats next door high blood pressure," he writes in October of 1985. I already have three, no four, hideous creatures with a strong cure, aiming, staring with their deadly eyes boring through the wall at the old Gaffer."

Four months later: "My Voodoo men are working (really) for me 24 hours a day. All I ask is for them to worry the very hell into their evil bodies - no pins, no needles, no pain."

Later more tangible results are produced: "I received a bottle of 'Witch Oil' to ward off enemies and I touched my head and hands with a few drops, reciting the 23rd psalm, and within an hour all hell broke loose - you know where. 4 radio cars, patrol, 7 police! They warned the old bastard to stay over the line, if they were called back he would GO! He had threatened Rob and our friend with an open penknife!"

Johnny's old neighbourhood had degenerated to the point where he

could no longer spend time out on the front stoop. Eventually he stopped answering his door, last barricade against a swelling ragtag army of panhandlers, scam-artists, beggars and Bible-lesson salesmen, people wanting money of a glass of water or to use the phone. Some who were just crazy and didn't seem to want anything special - just to get in.

A black woman begging for 25 cents tries to push her way in, "I grabbed my gun and said 'HIT THE FLOOR! I'LL BLOW HER AWAY!' She flew. Once they get in on you, you lose."

Halloween was sheer hell, "Hordes of niggers and trashy whites begging for other folks offal. My God help us get thru it!"

Almost worse than the panhandlers, though, were Johnny's growing throngs of fans.

The video release of *'Freaks'* in 1986 combined with exposure Johnny received in a book on freaks, authored by Richard Lamparski to raise his visibility with the general public. Johnny had never gone out of his way to seclude himself from the public, and those determined and persistent enough were able to secure his phone number and address.

While Johnny gained some genuine and lasting friendships from among these new fans, the majority were pushy, presumptuous, obnoxious individuals who clamoured for audience with Johnny and posed no less a threat to his mental health than the thieves and muggers of the neighbourhood. They wrote him, they called him, they knocked on his door unannounced, they walked down his alleyway shouting his name. They wanted to meet him, photograph him, videotape him, interview him. They wanted to see him 'perform', they wanted to borrow his photos and scrapbooks. They asked silly, stupid 'personal' questions. Worst of all he feared they would devour his free time, sipping beers in his livingroom as they sat around talking sports and baseball. Some prattled on about religion. Though Johnny was probably somewhat indulgent with most of them, he cursed them in his letters for "taking up 90% of my time ... stealing my time." "I REFUSE!" he vows in one of his many invectives against them. He despaired that these encumbrances would force him to abandon work on his biography. He instructed friends in letters never to even dream of talking sports or baseball with him.

Johnny writes in October of 1987 of being on the verge of a nervous breakdown, "due to the mad crush of so-called fans. I refer to them, as fanatics, crazy individuals. No respect for one's self-being or privacy. Rudely demanding interviews and forcefully at that."

Johnny now only rarely answered the phone.

He kept busy working on his biography and staying abreast of correspondence and screenpainting orders. Major, the most loved little dog in the world, was ever at his side and figured prominently in his letters. Johnny would cook him up a breakfast of scrapple and a small pancake as they frequently ate from the same plate.

Finally, on January 18th 1987, at one am, the neighbourhood caught up with Johnny.

Two black intruders broke into the rowhouse and manhandled Johnny and Rob. They went about ransacking the rooms, demanding money. For 2 hours of pure hell Johnny was pinned to the ground, sat upon and gagged with a thick suffocating glove in his face. Major barked feverishly but was left unharmed. Both Johnny and Rob suffered cuts and bruises. Johnny also had a cracked rib and the skin rubbed raw where he was held to the floor. The thieves made off with \$56 and Johnny's beloved and irreplaceable .32 pistol. The police were immediately called. As Johnny reports, "The could do nothing except send us to the hospital. We refused."

What saddened Johnny much more than the theft of cash was the loss of his gun. "... a beautiful 6-shot .32 Harrington and Richardson break-a-way model revolver." Not to mention the prospect of being murdered in his own home, which at one point during the attack he thought was happening.

The incident was deemed a minor one in light of innately Baltimore's heavy caseload of murders and rapes that routinely lit up the streets with patrol car flashers. It never made the papers, the intruders were never caught.

Johnny told only a very few close friends about it. One such confidant preached the virtues of forgiveness. "The only way I could really forgive now," responded Johnny bitterly, "is a whitehot bullet thru one of their eyes. Believe me."

The physical scars would heal in time, but the psychic scars never would. The remaining 4 years of Johnny's life were heavily woven with shock, bitterness and bouts of depression. He led an increasingly secluded existence, breaking off contact with many of his closest correspondents and friends. Now even the ringing of the phone, which he never answered could send him into a near panic. In his few letters he told friends not to call.

The hordes of demanding, obnoxious fans continued right up until the end. Johnny did his best to avoid them altogether.

Johnny died in his sleep on January 5th 1991, leaving Rob and

Major alone in the rowhouse. According to Rob, Johnny's last holiday season had been a happy one. Johnny, today lies buried on the family plot in the Greenmount cemetery.

Almost to the very end Johnny hoped to somehow reclaim the miniature train ride from dead storage and "rent or lease a small rundown house someplace in the woods where we might start a picnic camping ground, family type, and set the train up permanent ... let it follow a stream and perhaps roll over a bridge and really have fun."

In his letters, Johnny frequently referred to this book he was working on, his life story which never emerged in any substantial form. "Should this book get into print," he states in a letter, "it may never make us rich, but it could help get me out of this city."

"I always dreamed of a small place in the country - a comfortable, snug little house, a guest room or two all on one floor. Maybe I was expecting too much."

Special appreciation to Nick Bouges and Stuart Finkelstein, friends of Johnny who generously shared their letters with me.

HORROR, SLEAZE & THE BIZARRE

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NOOZE

The National Film Theatre, London, succumbs to the lure of Exploitation film ... after the groundbreaking season of A.I.P. flicks there's a lecture by Roger Corman ... who knows what may be next - why not ring the NFT switchboard and find out. Tell them Ungawal sent you ... that's sure to confuse them.

Stop Press Bub! Mickey Spillane proves he's a true Blue American and converts to Religion. Yes, that's right, tough jawed and square shaped Spillane goes Jehovah bound!! Meanwhile in the East the tabloids are full of gunk about the marriage of Chow Yun Fat ... unlike The Sport & The Weekly World news the headlines ask will Chow's bride get on with her Mother-in-Law??? Hot Gossip Hong Kong & Singapore style. More dirt next time. Till then Hasty LeVista and Ungawal

It's Woman-to-Woman time here inside the halls of Ungawal as two frisky females relate as only women can! When the ever abundant **Kitten Natividad** and female firebrand **Honey Parker** get down to some conversation you know it's gonna be wild. Cheesy clichés are just no good to Gals like these! So step right up and sample a free-flowing conversation that takes in all sorts of topics . . . including neat words for big Gazonga's, peeling off at Madonna's wedding, Russ Meyer and oral kicks!!

HP: Our readers would be pretty interested to know about your background, where you grew up.
KN: I was born in Mexico, I was born at home, my grandmother was the midwife, and my mother was a child, she was like sixteen years old and when I was coming out of her, she was giggling because she was embarrassed. She was that young, I grew up there, went to the Catholic school and I was a terrible little girl. I was very defiant, I always wanted to be different. I grew up as a strict Catholic, and I think that's part of the reason I am who I am, I do what I'm not supposed to do. I've made a career of it. I got so tired of the strict regulations, I wanted to be like everybody else, I wanted the freedom of choice. It's part of my growing up.

Kitten gives new meaning to the one dimensional word "Up"

Are your family still pretty strict?
Yeah, I'm 43 years old now and my mother calls me once a week: How are you doing; are you all right please give up dancing, it's time you hang up the G-string, I go mother, mother, mother, the audience still want me, they still want MORE, MORE, MORE! It's hard to hang up the G-string, I know I've got to do it sometime . . . eventually I will, and probably become a legitmate..Well, I am legitmate anyway.

AND THEY CALLED HER ☆
KITTEN!



Would you like to be a straight actress?

I've always loved comedy a lot. I don't think anybody could seriously take me as an actress, because I am not, you know, built to be like a serious mother or housewife. I will always look too sexy. So, I think I would just loooooove comedy, I love acting like a clown anyway. I would enjoy that. And I'm getting a lot of roles lately where I don't have to take my clothes off. I just wear sexy clothes and act kind of like a bimbo, it's fine with me. I've been playing a whore all the time, so playing a bimbo is just a little bit nicer.



Can you tell me some more about your family?

I have Mexican, Spanish and Indian in me. I come from a very big family, I'm the oldest of my siblings, like I said I'm quite a rebel, they all have kids, and I myself have never had children. And now that I want to, I guess my eggs are too old and they don't get, uh, hatched. My fans are my children.

When did you start to realise that you were going to be bigger than the other girls?

That didn't happen till I was 21 or 22. Until then I was well built, but I didn't get these humungous mountains until I went on the pill. You know, it affects people different ways, I put on weight, especially my big balloons!

Did you find a difference in the way people reacted to you?

Sure, if I walked in a room, all anyone could see were the tits. I began to feel like I was just a pair of walking gazongas, nobody noticed my face or my mind. But I've got over that now. When I go round town and I don't want to be bothered, don't want the attention, I'll wear a big old sweatshirt or T-shirt, and believe it or not, with a hat and dark glasses, nobody gives you the time of day.

How did you get over this feeling that people thought of you as just a pair of tits.

I had to start to believe in myself. I think the more you mature, the more you believe in yourself, anyway. And I started to deal with people, I had to make business contracts and talk business. Then eventually they would look in my eye and think of me as a person with a brain. I feel confident now. And I don't mind laughing at myself at all. A lot of times I cross the street and I run a little bit, and then all these people start giggling at me, and I just smile, because I know they're not making fun of me... they're just like in awe, and they just don't know how to cope with their own emotions. And it's actually them that can't deal with my... not my deformity, but my big majendous breasts.

What are all the words you use to describe them, your great gazongas?

(laughs) My big Titts, my mountains, uh, my massive breasts. (still laughing) I don't know.

Tell me, how did you get the name Kitten?

That name was given me when I was 19. You know my real name is Francesca, which is Frances in English, and the lady in the booking agency said, We can't have a dancer named Frances, what'll we call you? She liked to give people names, and she looked me up and down and said Kitten, we'll call you Kitten. You see I was quite shy, though I was gutsy, I looked like a kitten.

How did you get interested in show business?

Well I was living in LA, and I had a neighbour across the street that was dancing, and she was telling me she was making \$100 a night... And I said, Oh my goodness, I have a good body, and I looked at her and she was like chunky, not a bad looking person, but I didn't think my body was any worse or any better. And I thought, well if she can do it, I can do it, I'll just smile a lot. She told me where to go for the agency, then the agency sent me out there. And of course, the first time I did it, my feet were just like, you know, my knees were knocking against each other. And you know I said I was going to smile - Ha, Ha, Ha, I couldn't even make a smile, my muscles wouldn't - they were frozen. But anyway, the crowd knew there was something to me, I just got a standing ovation. And I said This Is Going to be my Life, I loved it there. And of course I told my mother, and they didn't speak to me for a whole year. Because being, you know, a very Catholic family they didn't approve of that, how can I show my body to all these men that I don't know? You know, it's awful to take money for doing that.

Meantime, you had found that you really loved it.

Oh, for the first time!

What made it feel so good?

You just love everybody out there, you just feel so loved, and you just feel like you have so much love, you are happy to be in this world.

So what happened after that?

Oh, I won the Miss Nude Universe contest, and I became a stripper instead of a Go-Go dancer, and being a stripper I was discovered by Russ Meyer. And then I had a long affair, on and off, for about twelve years with Russ. We never got married, though. It just happens, you get used to somebody. You find that you love them a lot, you know, spiritually more than lustfully, do you know what I mean? I mean I

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love him. I respect him a lot, but sometimes I don't want him as my Man, I want him more like a friend. And then there's times I want him as My Man, you know, I'm fickle. I'm a woman - I don't know what the fuck I want.

How do you mean, spiritually?
That I don't think I will ever stop loving him, and his spirit lives in me. He taught me a lot and, uh, sometimes I find myself talking like him, the same mannerisms, I'm opinionated just like he is about certain things. He just like lives in me.

When was the first time you realised he was the guy for you?
When I first met him I was scared to death of him, and I found him to be so... tall, and mean looking. Such a loud voice. But then I found him to be like a little boy, very sensitive, caring and loving, and he worries and worries about everything. Did you eat right? Are you taking care of yourself? And I said, This Man is Wonderful!

In interviews he does seem to be a hard, tough kind of a guy.
I know that! When I first made the movie 'Up' he made me cry every other day! SPEAK LOUDER! DON'T BLINK YOUR EYES! Like, it was my first film, so I was embarrassed at being yelled at in front of thirteen other people. But then, I don't know, in the second movie, we went out to dinner, just him and I, and he acted totally different. And that's when we both knew there was a little spark there. And we followed it, and it became a great big flame!

Russ always says you converted him to oral sex. How did this happen, and what was the problem before?
He was at war, right? Remember? In those days, men didn't believe, you know, they just wanted to Fuck women. They didn't make Love to them. He thought it was very, very macho. Hey, My dick is IT! The Best Thing, you don't need tongue, what's the matter with you girls. This Dick's Good, you know. So it was a very macho thing, and then I, I, you know, taught him how to make loooove. That it doesn't take away from his dick, just because he does oral sex. It makes the whole lovemaking better.

How did you broach the subject - what did you say, or do?
One time he was telling me, he was asking me what I thought about Sex. I said I loved sex, I'd do everything and I love everything done to me. And I said, I really love it when men go down on me. And he says, Oh, I don't do that. I said, Well then I just won't go to bed!

You don't mind talking about these personal things?

No! (laughs) I just hope he doesn't get mad. Now he's getting married. I don't know if it's true, I've been hearing this shit for a year.

Who would he be marrying?
I don't know, some... girl. But I doubt it. You see, girls always want to marry him because he's got bucks and a name. I never wanted to marry him, maybe I should have. But life goes on.

What did you do after Russ? Was it hard to find a new man in your life?

I'll never find one like him, no. And I'm not going to compare any man to him. I do all right. I like a man not to judge me. They meet me doing what I'm doing, then if they want to change me I don't like it.

Do you have a steady guy?

Yes, I do. He's a wonderful guy, and we've been together a year. He gets jealous! That's my problem with my boyfriends, they get very possessive and jealous, and don't want me taking my clothes off, or doing that, blah, blah, blah. Where Russ is different, he loved it!

What kind of work are you doing these days? Do you go on the road at all?

Stripping. Keeps me in shape. I don't go on the road any more, right now things aren't that good and I'm really tired of it. I like to be home for a while. The money's not that great right now. There's not a lot of money anywhere right now to tell you the truth. I just got two little kittens that are real brats, and I like being home with them.

Have you worked with any of the famous dancers and strippers, like Chesty Morgan or Liz Renay?

No, I don't get a chance to work with them, because they're all stars, and when we go dance, they only book one star at a time. But I get to meet them, and I've met Chesty Morgan, and she's just so much fun, she's a yackety-yak. God, you know, like, Uh huh? Uh huh? Mm,mm I'm not able to put a word in inchwise, she just rattles off, loves to talk. She sounds like Zsa Zsa Gabor. She's wonderful. They can only afford one star at a time, even in the films. Sometimes, when I do my bit parts, I don't really get to be with a bunch of people. Everybody's an unknown that I work with, because I'll be the one selling the film.

I heard Elvira was a good friend of yours.

She is a personal friend of mine who is a lot of fun. She's a great girl, and right now she's working on writing her new movie. A follow-up of 'Elvira'.

How did you meet?

I met her through a friend in New York that told me he knew her. What

happened, when he came to perform, he's like a rock singer, he invited me and invited her, and then we met there and became friends.

Do you get on well with women, do you often make good friends like that?

Yes, I have good female friends, I don't find myself competing with anybody, everybody is a human being. I grew up with a lot of the girls that I danced with, when I started off, and 22 years later we're still friends. And they know that I took it as a career, where they eventually married and had kids, but we still get together. I have a bit of normality in my life.

I believe you were at Sean Penn and Madonna's wedding?

Yes, I did that, uh-huh. I was the stripper. It was fun, it wasn't nothing wildly crazy though. They went wild and crazy drinking, but I didn't do anything out of hand, because basically Sean's a very shy guy, and I didn't want to do anything to embarrass him..

Russ always got better performances from you than other directors... does he work harder?

No! He wants perfection, and it doesn't matter how many takes it takes. Other guys, I do one or two takes, and they say OK. They don't want to... they're not bad directors, I don't know what their budget is. Probably that's it, because Russ will spend a lot of money on his films. He wants what he wants till he gets it. He makes you do it over and over and over till you want to do it right to get it over.

Could you list the films you've starred in - your Kittenography so to speak.

For starters I did... 'Taking it off No 1' and 'Taking it off No 2';... and 'Sizzle'; 'Night Patrol'; 'Airplane II'; 'Wildlife'; 'My Tutor'; 'The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas'; 'The Big House'; 'The Gong Show' movie 'Lady in Red'; 'Bodacious Ta-Tas'; 'Tittilation'; and of course you know 'Eroticise'. What else, oh yes 'Let's Talk Sex'; and 'Over 40 and Hard'... I can't think of any more. Most of them are Tits & Ass, you know, - comedy with a lot of nudity in it.

Kitten Navidad can be contacted at The Kitten Fan Klub P.O. Box 48938 Los Angeles, CA 90048. Send \$15 for the 'works' including eyeball bulging signed photos!

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EVERY MAN its PRISONER... EVERY WOMAN its SLAVE!

Samuel Z. Arkoff, cigar chomping, fast talking, mighty Movie man. During the 50s, 60s and 70s he co-headed American International Pictures (AIP), those three letters are legend, a guarantee of quality, excitement and real teen orientated product.

During its 35 years, AIP produced and distributed over 500 films, it's been one hell of an operation! Just recently Sam Arkoff hit London to launch a feast of AIP films, and the Ungawa! 'A' team Alex McNeil and Cathal Tohill slung a few questions at the Exploitation Film Supremo. As you'd expect, Arkoff let rip with some hot thoughts on his career as well as dishing the dirt on Harry Alan Towers, Beach Party flicks, Corman and sleaze film king, Jess Franco!

the Irresistible Rise of A.I.P.

IT ALL BEGAN WAY BACK FOR ARKOFF. As a young boy he was fascinated by film and longed to work in the movie business. During his teens he was an avid film watcher catching subtitled 'foreign films' every Wednesday night at his college cinema. These arty flicks were a far cry from the hell-for-leather exploitation films he would later produce, 'pick-up' and distribute. Films with sizzling titles like 'I was a Teenage Werewolf', 'Voodoo Woman', 'Bucket of Blood', 'Black Sabbath', 'Foxy Brown' and 'Lizard in a Woman's Skin'!!!

After graduating as a lawyer, Arkoff put his legal skills to good use, giving hard nosed legal aid and advice to a variety of film companies. Through his legal work he became friendly with many bizarre and appealing film folk, guys like Bela Lugosi and Ed D. Wood Jr., and he quickly found himself *"a sane man in an insane business."* Yet that was one of the things that made it so attractive *"I gotta tell you something, one thing I love about this business, so many odd guys on the scene."*

During a title wrangle, he met his future partner, Jim Nicholson, and AIP was born. With Arkoff's legal/production experience and Nicholson's skill in

advertising and marketing they made a tough-o-team. All they needed was some hard cash. They borrowed \$3,000 and the rest is history!

With these tiny financial resources they swung into operation and although the majors were finding it rough, AIP were determined to succeed. They sized up the situation and as Arkoff puts it: *"... necessity breeds its own and we did what we had to do!"* Desperation mixed with ingenuity pushed them to make the most of their resources, and if they didn't have a heap of finance, well they had plenty of raw talent. Within a few months, AIP had become the solid centre for a small group of talented men. Corman and Lou Rusoff were just two of them. Rusoff, Sam Arkoff's brother-in-law, was to become AIP's main scriptwriter, and one of the unsung figures in Exploitation film.

Inspiration and Exploitation

People, Talent and Exploitation, these were the keys to AIP's success, over the next three decades they recognised and sought out talented newcomers, gave them the breaks and often stretched them to new limits. In the 50s it was Roger Corman, in the 60s Jack Nicholson, Dennis Hopper, Curtis Harrington and Francis Ford Coppola. While in the 70s it was guys like John Millius and David Cronenberg.

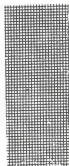


Sam Arkoff today

Back in the beginning, Exploitation really was the name of the game. *"We didn't have much in the beginning except showmanship, didn't have the stars, didn't want them really... we had the title, artwork and a concept, and we had to sell the concept."* In those days Exploitation didn't have the tainted connotations that it has today. *"Well let me put it this way about Exploitation. You see it's an odd word, it didn't used to be a bad word. When the Ringling Brothers Circus came round to my little town, they ran a Circus parade to get you to come out for the evening performance, nobody said that was Exploitation. But sure as hell, that was Exploitation. Exploitation was good showmanship."*

"Anybody can buy time. Exploitation consists to some degree of publicity, showmanship and costs a hell of a lot less than running Millions of dollars in a television campaign. Being able to take a nobody and a nothing picture that just was a good idea, and make it into something. I think that's a great accomplishment."

When it came to Salesmanship, Showmanship and Exploitation, Arkoff's partner Jim Nicholson was a bit of a genius. He dreamed up the titles, artwork and copy... and boy, what copy. He came up with the title first,



'I was a Teenage Werewolf!' Wolves! Breasts! Menace! and real Exploitation.



something guaranteed to burn its way into the brains of teenagers everywhere, then they'd get down to the business of producing the picture. As Sam succinctly puts it: **"We had a Million Dollar title and a \$100,000 dollar picture!"** All of the AIP titles were aimed square at the teen market and teenage boys in particular. Being small, nimble and desperately flexible proved mighty useful to AIP. Unlike larger companies they could spring into action, pick up on trends and fads, milk them and whip them out into double bills before the idea had become staid, tired and old hat.

Although AIP films were aimed sock, wham at teenagers, that doesn't mean that they lacked a moral message or moralistic tone. These AIP flicks captured much of the exuberance of teenhood. They had teenage stars and teenage casts, and the fast and furious production gave it an added air of vibrancy. But at the end of the day, they were *teenpics* made by conservative guys and aimed at the Deep South Drive-in and Bible Belt market.

The Odd Guys!

This was a difficult trick to pull off. On the one hand, you had to attract the teenagers with the promise of thrills, kicks and weird desires, and on the other you had to avoid upsetting the hightones who were in power. Even the squeaky clean beach party flicks could run into problems. **"Let me put it this way. When we came out with these beach films, bikinis themselves were part of the whole thing. We had bikinis on these ads. Do you know there were at least a couple of hundred newspapers in the US that would brush out the bellybutton! Ridiculous...huh?"**

The Deep South and Conservatism meant that sometimes a good exploitable picture had to be passed up. Jess Franco's dreamlike **'Venus in Furs'** was a good example. **"I met Jess Franco, somewhere in Europe. He was an odd guy but he did some interesting pictures. In many ways, in another era, Jess would have had a bigger reputation than he did. There were some scenes in 'Venus in Furs' that were very good. Definitely. In fact, 'Venus in Furs' is one of the few pictures I ever had an erotic feeling when I was watching it. We didn't make it. I'll tell you who really did that one, it was Harry Alan Towers. The infamous Harry Alan Towers. Harry was a crazy guy, he could raise money like nobody I ever knew. Harry himself was an odd guy, the blandest guy I ever met. You could insult Harry every way, up and down and it never fazed him. He was accustomed to being told the picture he had was shit! . . . and Harry would just beam and say OK, we'll switch out money to another picture. So we never did take 'Venus in Furs', never really touched it. In my opinion it was, for us - Too Hot!"**

One Wild Picture

By the end of the 50s, AIP had firmly established itself as the Kingpin of Independent Film Production in the US. In the 60s, they swung into colour and kept firmly abreast of changing teenage fashion. From **The T.A.M.I. Show** (1964) through to **'The Trip'** and the nihilistic scuzz of **'The Wild Angels'**, they moved quickly and freely with the times. As the Sixties came to an end, AIP peaked with **'3 in the Attic'** (1968) and **'Wild Streets'** (1968). Both films starred the pale, fragile and appealing Christopher Jones. With Jones, AIP could have really gone places, but the young star bottomed out and flopped his delicate lid. **"I'll tell you, that was a great sadness. That was too damn bad. The problem with Christopher was when this great director got hold of him, David Lean, that picture took a hell of a long, long time, and somewhere in the process Christopher went off the rocks. I really don't know if it was drugs. But somehow, when he came back he was a different guy, and he never made another picture. Nobody's ever heard of him since. He really**

had the qualities to make a great star. Those two pictures he did really knocked the women out!"

'Wild in the Streets' was a wild picture, and a great AIP concoction. The was one teenage flick made by adults that really hit home. Based on a story by Robert Thom, it had counter culture ambience, and a protest message to boot. But more importantly it was tinged with world weary cynicism and a perverse sense of irony. Things that were pretty alien to the average teen.

The Seventies heralded a new decade for Arkoff and AIP. In some ways things were beginning to fall apart. They'd missed their chance at the 'big time' with Christopher Jones, and now Roger Corman was about to exit stage left. Corman and Arkoff parted company after the epic mess **'Gasss, or How it became necessary to destroy the world in order to save it'** (1970). **"Let me put it this way, with all due respect to Roger, who I still love - the fact is that 'Gasss' was a disaster from the beginning. He thought it was a great picture. Roger, let me tell you, is a very conservative guy. The point about it is that 'Gasss' was his idea of a 60s or 70s picture. Roger thought we destroyed it in the distribution. Anyone who's ever seen 'Gasss' will agree with me that it's all Gas!"**

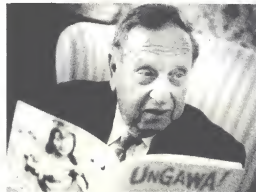
After nearly two decades in the business AIP had changed it was closer to being a lumbering Corporation than an ultra lean Maverick. Even so, AIP still came up with the goods in the 70s. Most writers and critics who focus on AIP are quick to praise the Poe stuff, those early Monster epics and the 'counter culture' bag. Very few pick up on the last great AIP cycle - the 'Blaxploitation'. This was the last great grassroots AIP cycle. By now the company had grown just too big to keep pace with the fad, more of their product was picked up from smaller independents.

In the mid 70s Arkoff decided to call it a day with AIP, and go for a smaller, more middle operation. He's still in the business today, and still wants to make films for teenagers. When asked to produce the last Beach movie **'Back to the Beach'** (1989), he refused because Annette and Frankie were Adults.

A Taste of Arkoff

The Ungawa! 'A' team selects AIP Faves:

It Conquered the World (1958); Attack of the Giant Leeches (1959); Brain that wouldn't die (1959); Daddy 'O' (1959); Konga (1960); Black Sunday (1960); Burn Witch Burn (1961); Night Tide (1961); Beach Party (1963); The Last Man on Earth (1963); The Man with the X-Ray Eyes (1963); Attack of the Mushroom People (1963); Godzilla vs The Thing (1964); Black Sabbath (1964); Taboos of the World (1965); Succubus (1968); The Glory Stompers (1968); Devil's Angels (1969); The House that Screamed (1969); Chastity (1969); Scream and Scream Again (1969); Bloody Mama (1970); Dr Phibes Rises Again (1972); Coffy (1973); Dillinger (1973); Sisters (1973); Deranged (1974); Raw Meat (1974); Cooley High (1975); Manson (1976); Empire of the Ants (1977); Rolling Thunder (1977); The Town that dreaded Sundown (1977).



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Girl on a Chain Gang.

films

SPERMULA, France, 1975, Dir: Charles Matton. Stars: Udo Kier, Dayle Hatton, Francois Dunoyer, Jocelyne Boisseau.

Ah, the sweet taste of Euro-sleaze . . . something for those folks who savour the finer things in life: tasty decor, baroque musik and a heavy dollop of A-R-T. With a title like *Spermula*, you'd expect a total bout of semen slurping, and dick nibbling, mixed with cheap X-rated sensibilities. Not so, this is a film that moves to a more languid and knowing beat. It's French and tries hard to be highbrow. There's plenty of mumbled voiceovers and other artful nonsense, but in among the roughage there are a few things that'll intrigue and tantalise. The shimmering decor pulls at the eyeballs and the weird musik on the soundtrack bends and twists the ear. When it's good, it's darkly mysterious. When it's bad, it's puerile and deserves to die.

Spermula was helmed by Charles Matton, a talented guy who only made a pair of films, it's obvious that he had a wild eye for the tasteful and the absurd. He hits the high notes when the scenes go totally set bound and artificial, and the film climaxes with an infernal orgy which tips its cap towards the grotesque. In a room filled with intricate, old time erotica, a feast of midgets and silken clad girls get up to no good. Some rubber backed dude on a revolving platter fondles himself while mucho champagne spurts freely over babes in nicely cut dresses. A midget pops out from under a Woman's dress, a sadist strokes a furry shoe . . . this really is Sinema!

Arty, oddball, kooky and quaint. It's a film of small; interesting pleasures. There's Udo Kier and some great high

pitched wailing on the soundtrack definitely not your average horror horse. (M.S.).

Macumba Sexual Spain, 1981. Golden Films Internacional, Dir/Screenplay Jesus Franco. Stars: Ajita Wilson, Candy Coster (Lina Romay), Robert Foster (Antonio Mayans), Lorna Green, J.G. Gabral, Jose Ferro.

Macumba Sexual is one of Franco's more interesting recent films.

Macumba is made in the same vein as most of the other soft/hardcore films he directed for Golden Internacional - not really daring for a continental audience, but absolutely shocking for a Spanish one. Apparently, all these films were shot back-to-back in the same villa in Alicante, which, I believe, belongs to the co-producer/actor/recent Franco partner Jose Antonio Mayans.

In *Macumba Sexual*, Jess has used a favourite trick of his, returning to and reworking one of his old films, the 1971 classic '*Vampiros Lesbos*' (*Las Vampiras*/ the Heiress of *Dracula*); the first and maybe only one of its kind - a sea, sex, sun, arty vampire film. Here the seaside is replaced by a desert, and the vampire theme by voodoo and witchcraft. With almost no dialogue, constantly shifting between dreams and reality, the narrative style has the quality of a nightmare, a mood that sets it apart from Franco's usual exploitation stuff.

Princess Tara Obongo, '*Godless of Unspeakeable Lust*', uses her Dark Powers to ensnare a hapless couple of young American yuppies, directing their dreams and drawing them to her so that she can imbue them with Evil and so conquer the world. Franco appears in an uncredited and extravagant cameo, a simple-minded hotel keeper who collects stuffed fish and plays 'peeping tom' while Candy Coster (Lina Romay in a blonde wig) has nightmares during a sun bath. She also wears the most outdated 70s costumes, including some extra too small bikinis, perfect for showing off her recent weight gains.

Ajita Wilson is great as the Black bisexual queen, and has some magnificent pictorial scenes, like when she is lying in the desert with a sort of obscene bone puppet on her genitals, or when she appears with her two human dog slaves. But she can't surpass the fascinating presence of Soledad Miranda in the original version. She also has some porno bravura moments, like being masturbated with an ivory white dildo representing some nasty, snarling pagan god, but she saves those with the crazed look of wild excitement in her eyes.

Like most of Franco's 'good' films, '*Macumba Sexual*' fascinates and captivates. The 'deja vu' impression may spoil it for the connoisseur, but compared with some of his later efforts (like '*Esmeralda Bay*', a disaster) it's a must see. (L.B.)

Raw Deal, USA, 1948, Dir: Antony Mann. Stars: Dennis O'Keefe, Claire Trevor, Marsha Hunt John Ireland.

Black with a dark Satanic undertow. This is the dark, mysterious cinema we love. Even cleft chinned Dennis O'Keefe delivers the goods in this eerie little number. *Raw* kicks off with a female voiceover, somehow it makes it more spooky, and descends to an intensity that few films can equal. It's a complex gripper of a film that overflows with untapped desire, and if you don't tremble at the stark poetry of the dialogue, or the beauty of the keylighting *Those eyes. Those eyes.* You'll certainly be filled in by the sheer brutality that its main men exhibit. They don't come much better than this. (B.S.).

Girl on a Chain Gang, USA, 1966, Prod/Dir & Written by Jerry Gross Stars: William Watson, Julie Ange, R.K. Charles.

Harrowing, real mean and relentless, this 2,000 *Maniacs* type tale makes the North/South divide look even wider. Three Jaunty Northerners get a healthy slice of Southern Hospitality in this '*lets kill the nigger and rape the white girl*' grainy Black & White. More than just a homage to the power of inbreeding this is one of the most unspeakable and malignant films ever made. Degradation follows degradation as the sappy Northerners squelch deeper into the clutches of the Southern psycho cops. Hard to watch, unhealthy and unique. (F.H.).

relentless.



Style, aristocracy and a decadent need for Blood, these are the hallmarks of the Vampire - the undernourished anti-hero that's hooked himself into the minds of Millions! It's obvious that most folks are drawn to the underlying sexual charge or throb, but there's a lot more to the Vampire than the lure of deep red blood. It's a myth that has real appeal, and judging by the numbers of Vampire Clubs & Societies that are around, it's something that means different things to different folks.

Some go for the history, feeling a kinship with a now long gone and more civilised era. A few are drawn by the underlying sexual thing and it's deep rooted S & M aspect, with the Vampire as Master and the victim a willing slave! For others, it's got a social kick and gives them a chance to mingle with like minded, alienated outsiders and sensitive folks.

Each Vampire Club or Society has it's own orientation, some are devoted to one aspect of Vampiredom, others form an umbrella for the needs of the members and are part historical society, social club and haven for lonely blood drinkers. Here's a round up of some of the big ones:

LOYALISTS OF THE VAMPIRE REALM

This is my favourite Vampire Society ... after all who could resist any organisation run by a 'long legged, buxom red head' called Lucinda von Reichon (and that's her real name!). L.O.T.V.R. was formed in 1984 by a handful of underground filmmakers in Berlin and became official in late '86. They publish a newsletter dedicated to sharing knowledge about 'these grand creatures of the night' and have over 7,500 members worldwide! L.O.T.V.R. will soon be publishing it's very own Betty Page type photo magazine called 'Vamps and Their Victims', and you know what type of meat you'll be getting when the fanged-up and buxotic Lucinda declares her 'first love is the colour of blood in 'B' Movies, and her second 'sexually orientated leather clothing, magazines, films and books!' So if you feel like 'succumbing to your nocturnal urges' send 3 IRC's to: P.O. Box 6975 Beverly Hills, CA 90212 - 6975, USA for details about their newsletter and other more kinky stuff.

THE VAMPIRE INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Scholarly and serious. The Vampire Information Exchange is a 'correspondence club for people interested in all aspects of the Vampire in fact and fiction.' They publish a newsletter 5-6 times a year which tackles all sorts of

Vampire Klubs

Vampire related topics including Vampire Chickens, the Caloric value of blood, the role of the female Vampire in film, Vampires in Indonesia and Vampire Music. Send 2 IRC's for membership information to: Eric S. Held P.O. Box 328 Brooklyn, NY 11229, USA

THE COUNT DRACULA FAN CLUB

This one's the new boy on the UK Vampire block. They offer their quarterly newsletter 'Crimson' for £7 (UK rates) and £11.50 to the rest of the world. Published by Phill White 127 Reforne, Portland Dorset DT5 2AP, England.

VAMPIRE ARCHIVES

One of the longest established Vampire societies. This is definitely aimed at the more erudite and scholarly Vampire lover. These mature followers of Vampdom state their purposes as 'ethical, social, moral and educational'. But, they're still sophisticated enough to enjoy 'B' Movies and the more lusty side to the subject. Send \$5 (cash) for a sample newsletter and more info to: Penthouse North 29 Washington Square West, New York NY 10011, USA

THE VELVET VAMPIRE

This homegrown group has received some unwarranted and unkind press. Despite this, they're still a genial group who welcome other pale, delicate and doomed souls. They publish their own small journal, have regular meetings, organise outings and other Vampire related events. Essential for anyone who'd like to meet other folk who are drawn to the lore of the Vampire! Write for membership and other details to: Alice Pinder P.O. Box 68 Keighley, BD22 6RU England



THE VAMPIRE SOCIETY

'For the Blood is the Life' cries The Vampire Society Journal and who are we to disagree. This worthy society was formed in 1987 and fills the gap for serious-o Vampire Lovers who are into 'corresponding' - exchanging opinions and information. Send £6.50 if you'd like to subscribe to their mighty organ. Next issue: A Human Vampires Special! Allen J Gittens 38 Westcroft, Chippenham Wilts. SN14 0LY England

THE COUNT KEN FAN CLUB

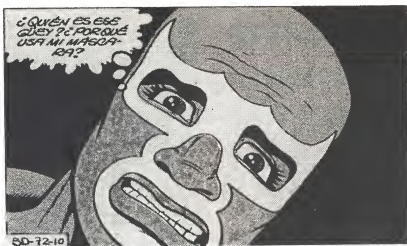
You get all sorts in the Vampire world and this one is aimed straight at the face of 'the horror fan'. \$5 a year membership gets you a small clutch of goodies including a membership card, monthly newsletter and club pencil! If you feel tempted write to Count Ken 12 Palmer Street Ma 01970, USA

THE VAMPIRE GUILD

You can subscribe to their monthly newsletter for \$45 (European rate), \$30 (US rate). Covers latest Vampire books, videos and films. Write for sample copy information to: 2926 W. Leland, Chicago IL 60625, USA

MISS LUCY WESTERNA SOCIETY OF THE UNDEAD

Send \$4 for sample newsletter to: Lewis Saunders 125 Taylor Street, Jackson, TN 38301, USA



SD-72-10

BLUE DEMON AND SON

Blue Demon and
Blue Demon Jr.
interviewed in
Mexico City,
April 1991,
by Chloe Sayer



EN TANTO, SOBRES
EL RING, EL ES
TRAFICADOR SE
RESTORCIA CON LOS
BRUTALES GOLPES.

"I'm proud to be an idol. It's hard for wrestlers to achieve success - it's hard for us to stay alive with our health intact. During the early years, when I was starting out, none of us imagined we'd become legendary figures."

Blue Demon, caped and masked, sits on a floral couch surrounded by gilt mirrors and cut glass ornaments. The couch is covered with heavy duty polythene. We are on the north side of Mexico City, in the house of the parents of his son's wife.

For decades Blue Demon has remained one of the most famous names in Mexican wrestling. Today the star of 'Blue Demon and the Beast' (1965), 'Spiders from Hell' (1966) and 'The Invasion of the Dead' (1972), runs a gymnasium for would-be wrestlers and bodybuilders in the Colonia Montezuma. In 1989 he retired in triumph from the wrestling ring with the mask of his old rival, Rayo de Jalisco (Lightning from Jalisco).

Now the legend lives again. His son, Blue Demon Junior, fights regularly at the Arena Coliseo and appears on the cover of wrestling fanzines. "I never planned to be a wrestler. Without knowing it, I must have carried the seed

within me. When he saw how determined I was, my father helped me train. Although he did his best to discourage me at the start. He asked me to take a University degree and this I did, in case I need to follow a new direction later."

Like his father, Blue Demon Junior has changed course as a wrestler. "Together we've come full circle. My father started out *rudo*, but became a clean fighter by popular demand. I started out as a clean fighter, but decided recently to turn *rudo*. My natural aggressivity has come to the fore! Protesting supporters have twice stained my costume with indelible ink, but most seem to accept the change."

Blue Demon nods. "I'm pleased my son has turned *rudo*. When I was young my public saw me as very destructive. Rolando Vera, who shaped my career when I was a novice, advised me to fight as a *rudo*. He noticed how roughly I used

EL DEMONIO AZUL

to slap my friends on the back - it hurt them, but think like nothing to me. Back in 1948, when I moved from Monterrey to Mexico City, very few wrestlers wore masks. Just El Santo, Black Shadow and I - and a few North Americans. I think the best wrestler of those times was Tarzan Lopez. I was a bad father, because I was always travelling. When I came home, I slept. My youngest son (Blue Demon Junior) would come to the fights. He watched the wrestlers, he saw their injuries, but he also saw the passion of the crowd. In my time I've been badly injured. I hope he'll never suffer as I have."

Blue Demon Junior interrupts: "In the ring our masks conceal our identity, giving us an aura of magic and mystery. People like to imagine that we earn a fortune, but of course that's not true. They think we have bodyguards, jets and luxury cars, but the truth is very different. We suffer pain every day of our lives. We are the best and the most complete athletes: we need to offer spectacle, to fly through the air. From out there it may look easy, but it's not! What you see is real blood. When we fight we need the support of the public. They drive us on - sometimes they become hysterical with emotion."

Does he ever receive love letters?

"Yes, I get love letters from women. Usually they are from very young girls, who have turned me into an idol. They tell me they like my body and want to spend a night with me. I also get a lot of letters from children. They ask me to explain the secrets of the universe, because they think I have supernatural powers. I have no regrets although I shouldn't like my son to follow in my footsteps. I shall probably be unable to stop him, just as my father was unable to stop me."

Blue Demon Junior's wife says she rarely watches her husband wrestle: it alarms her too much. Roberto, their son of three, raises his hands in a wrestling pose. Still masked, Blue Demon drives off into the harsh sunlight of the Mexico City afternoon.

Bigger than life, the brawny and tough Blue Demon and Blue Demon Jr. on the cover of Lucha Libre, the popular Mexican Wrestling magazine.

(opposite page) More than just a Wrestler, Blue Demon is an idol, star of films and comics. Note the no-holds barred Rudo fighting style ... you just don't mess with Blue Demon.

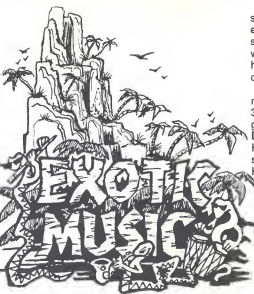
Coming soon ... more Mexican magic and madness ... an interview with El Santo and an exclusive on Son of El Santo!



BLUE DEMON Y BLUE DEMON JR.
¡LOS DEMONIOS AZULES!

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When Hawaii became the 49th state of the Union back in 1950, the US went a little crazy. Virtually overnight America became obsessed with the Exotic. Suburban patios across the country were transformed into pseudo-Polynesian total environments complete with tikis, tiki torches, fake waterfalls and all manner of tropical trappings. Ersatz paradise quickly became part of America's cultural landscape.

For those who didn't want to go to all the trouble of transforming their backyards into mini-Disneylands, but still wanted to experience paradise, the wisest investment was an album of Exotic Music by Martin Denny. Denny's music expressed everything that the collective imagination yearned for in its lust for the Exotic. It was lush, lovely, soothing, exciting and very, very exotic. My first exposure to the music of Martin Denny came at the age of 15 when one of my father's biker friends literally forced me to put on headphones and listen to Exotica from start to finish. The image of this mean motherfucker holding an easy listening LP, insistently reiterating that it was "the best fucking music on the planet" is one that won't soon be forgotten. Nor will the sounds I heard that day. Haunting sounds, mesmerising rhythms and texture unlike anything I'd ever heard. I became a dyed-in-the-wool Denny fan that hot

summer afternoon in '72. Back then every thrift store had such extensive selections of Martin Denny discs that it was easy to find mint copies of anything he put out without paying more than 50 cents, tops!

Today, his admirers are legion, and it's not uncommon for his records to go for 30 bucks a pop. And people pay it - gladly. When a friend told me that Martin Denny was still performing at a hotel in Hawaii, I was on a plane to the 49th state faster than you can say King Kamehameha...

Boyd: *What was it about the exotic that appealed to you and made you want to communicate it musically?*

Martin: The word exotic of course conjures up a lot of things in one's mind. This is the term that has been applied to me because it is a little off the beaten track, soundwise, and conjures up strange places and locales. But I sort of fell into it, and the fact that it became popular gratifies me very much.

Was your move to Hawaii inspired by a love of the exotic, or did that come about from being in a place like Hawaii?

When I first arrived in Hawaii, Honolulu to be exact, in January of 1954, it was because I was under contract to Don-the-Beachcomber's, where I appeared for a number of years. It had nothing to do, at the time, with being inspired by anything that was so-called exotic. However, being in a place like Hawaii, certainly contributed to my later development.

When did your interest in ethnic music develop and when did you begin incorporating it into what you were doing?

My interest in ethnic music started around the period of January of 1956, when I opened the Shell Bar at Henry J. Kaiser's Hawaiian Village. It was about that time I became interested, on account of the various ethnic groups that I encountered. I also cultivated the friendship and acquaintances of many airline personnel - stewardesses, pilots, and navigators - who brought me back some very odd ethnic instruments from far-away places like Japan, Hong Kong, Bangkok and Bali. They were so unique that I started to incorporate them into some of my arrangements.

Creating a music both primitive and relaxing seems very odd. How did it occur to you to try such a thing?

Performing music which sounded primitive and relaxing at the same time may have seemed very odd at the time, but it seemed to attract a lot of attention and audience response. It sort of intrigued me - it was a challenge to try out some of these things. You might say that this was my laboratory, a place to experiment with incorporating new sounds into what I was doing.

Did you have any trouble finding compatible musicians?

I was very fortunate in acquiring some

Boyd Rice talks to MARTIN DENNY

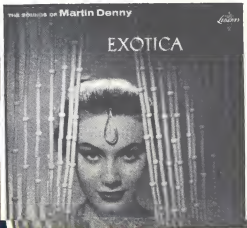
very talented musicians who were very flexible and willing to try any ideas of mine. The group consisted at the time of Arthur Lyman, who played vibraphone and marimba; John Cramer, who played bass and also doubled on various other instruments; and Augie Cologne, who was my percussionist. He played bongos, congas, and all the Latin effects, and also did a good part of the bird calls that I incorporated into some of my arrangements. I do think that, had I tried this same experiment on the mainland, it would not have been successful. I don't think the musicians would have accepted some of these ideas that I had, but the boys in the group were most cooperative and very curious about some of the things that we were doing. In fact, after awhile, they started contributing a lot of great ideas which we incorporated into the group.



THE MARTIN DENNY GROUP. FROM BOTTOM TO TOP: MARTIN DENNY, HARVEY RADDAL, JULIUS WECHEER AND AUGIE COLON.

What was it like to see a Martin Denny show when you and the boys were at the International Marketplace?

To describe a Martin Denny show when I was appearing at the International Marketplace is not a very easy thing to do, but I will try to recreate some of the highlights of it. First of all, we appeared on a stage that was quite large, it was about 18 feet deep, and about 22 feet long - we took up the entire space. On



The Exotic Sounds of MARTIN DENNY

Forbidden Island



So, we came up with an integrated sound that later has been described as 'the Martin Denny sound', which has been imitated by many musical groups throughout the country.

What is there about Martin Denny, as an individual, that caused you to create such a distinctive body of work?

To tell you a little more about Martin Denny, about my ideas and what it was that made me do what I did, I should give you a little bit of my background. When I first started studying music at the age of 10, I was rather precocious at the piano, but I did have a good musical background in the classical field.

When I was about 20 years of age, I went down to South America with a band. I was down there for almost 5 years - four and a half to be exact. I spent about 3 years in Buenos Aires and the Argentine. Our group was tremendously popular at the time. There were 6 of us, and we were representative of an American jazz group, one of the first of its kind to go down to South America. We toured Columbia, Peru, Chile, the Argentine and we made quite a few trips to Rio de Janeiro. Along the way, I picked up the Latin influence of the different countries, which stayed with me in the form of a lot of my rhythmic effects. The Latin influence is apparent in many of the things that I do.

When I got out of the Service in WWII, I went back to school again and started to study orchestration and composing with some very fine teachers. I spent about 2 or 3 years doing this and I think it really paid off for the future. I had no idea that I would eventually become involved in the type of music I finally came up with in Hawaii. I was very grateful to some of my teachers. One was Dr Wesley Labia Lent, who was a great pedagogue, a great composer in his own time. I studied counterpoint composition and piano with him. I then studied with Arthur Land, who was a tremendous orchestrator. He taught me the economy of writing for small groups,

and for producing colours. He had an analogy that music could be compared to colours, the various spectrum of colour. So I think that really played an important part in my life.

I fell in love with Hawaii when I first went over there. I loved the surroundings, the sun and the surf, the lovely beaches, everything that is Hawaii, and most of all, the friendly, interesting people. When the opportunities did arise, and I was able to put this group together, it was as though it was an opportunity that I had been waiting for years. It was there and I never knew it until that moment came along and everything seemed to fall into place. It changed my whole life around, and also affected the lives, I should say, of the people that work with me. We still do have a great rapport with one another.

It was one of the most gratifying things in my life that we eventually created an original sound. It was identifiable and in my travels throughout the United States, and in my appearances in Hawaii, the attention that we got was, I guess, the culminating result of all the things that took me so many years to arrive at. Even today, when I look back at it, because I no longer have my group - I am performing the piano at a very beautiful hotel called the Monoloni Bay Hotel on the big island of Hawaii - it is still very gratifying because there are still so many people that come by to listen to me and recall the sounds, the group, the records and some of my appearances.

How did you feel when the market started getting flooded with imitation exotic music? Did you feel ripped off? When my first record, 'Exotica', was released in 1957, it was a tremendous success. About that time hi-fi and stereo were just breaking, and 'Exotica' had the quality that showed off the best of the separation of sound. It was used by dealers throughout the country. The initial sale of 'Exotica' gave me a silver

this stage was quite an array of instruments, which consisted of piano, vibes, marimba, bass and our extensive percussionist's section, (the percussionist was eventually assisted by our 5th man, Frankie Kim).

My first group featured Arthur Lyman on the vibes, but he left the group in November of 1957, and was replaced by Julius Wechter, who was with me for seven years and later went on to achieve fame with his Baja Marimba Band and his association with Herb Alpert & the Tijuana Brass. So we had this ethnic appearing group. Our bass player, Harvy Raggsdale, was part Chinese and Hawaiian. Then there was Frankie Kim, who was Korean, and Julius and myself were nonlocals. Julius originally came from Chicago and I was from Los Angeles.

As for the setting of the stage, we filled it with our array of primitive instruments. We had a marvelous collection of Burmese tuned gongs that hung in the background. Overhead, there was a swinging ceiling fan that moved up and down vertically, creating an almost hypnotic effect for the audience. Of course, our lighting effects were very outstanding and the sound was super. When we put on this show, it was like a ballet because of the way the men moved around. I often described it as an art form, it was one of the most unique presentations in the islands I think. People still remark about it. All of the men were so enthusiastic about what they did, and they really put their personalities into every performance. As a result, it became so precise in its presentation that people were amazed not only by the versatility of the musicians themselves, but that we were able to employ all of these primitive instruments plus the modern sound of the conventional instruments that we used - which the Westerner is accustomed to. We were able to come up with some different rhythmic sounds - one of our strong points - because most of the men doubled on percussion. Julius played boobams - which is a 'Bamboo' rhythm logo spelled backward. No matter what we played if it was of an ethnic character, he would master it and of course the other boys did likewise.



record - 400,000 LP's were sold. Then shortly after that, a rash of similar types of records started to come out, which I guess was inevitable, because when someone comes up with a new product that's a little different, everybody wants to get on the bandwagon.

I would say Arthur Lyman, who was in my first group, probably did very well; in that he left me, formed his own group and went back to playing for Henry J. Kaiser at the Hawaiian Village. Shortly after my record came out, he came out with an LP very similar in style to what I had been doing and he was very successful in it. Subsequently, he fashioned his whole career based on the original sounds that we had. I think it was inevitable that it happened. Of course, I had mixed emotions about it at that time, and especially when other groups unabashedly started to imitate my style.

What can you tell me about Les Baxter? Did you know him personally; if so, what sort of guy was he?

Les Baxter is a very talented man. As a result of my recording a number of selections from a suite that he had written called 'The Ritual Dance of the Savage', I came up with what is probably the most outstanding recording I ever had, 'Quiet Village'. Since it was tremendously successful, I should feel very grateful towards him.

In meeting him personally, he was a very quiet, laidback sort of person, and very, very professional - very involved in doing a great deal of writing. I never really got to know him in a personal sense. He was a little, I wouldn't say uptight, but his personality was such that we just didn't seem to hit it off together. I just had a feeling that perhaps he might have resented me having cashed in on some of his compositions. In fact a lot of people actually thought that I had written 'Quiet Village', and consistently asked me if I had written it, which of course I would deny and give him full credit. But in later years, when I gave a number of concerts, I invited him on several occasions as a guest conductor at some of the concerts that I performed at. He was very gracious about performing with me. On other occasions, when I gave some concerts with a large orchestra, he was gracious enough to loan me some of his orchestration.

My last encounter with Les was about 6 months ago when he called me long distance and requested a favour of me. He said he was writing a suite, based on the Bahamas, that he wanted to start off with some bird calls, so he asked me if I had a tape that I would allow him to have. Now that was a switch, for a long time I had a feeling that it was a real put down using these bird calls. But, much to the surprise of everyone, including myself, that was one of the great features of the tropical, exotic sound heard in my first recording of 'Exotica', and subsequently in 'Quiet Village'. So, him making a request of that sort, I guess it sort of even things out.

Did you know Sandi Warner ('The Exotic Girl')? I've always wondered if you chose her, or if it was Liberty's choice?

Sandi Warner was the model that posed on at least 12 of my covers. I had nothing to do with the selection of the models, though I will say that the art department had good taste in selecting her because she is certainly one of the photogenic persons I have ever seen. But, as I said, it was Liberty Record's choice.

I did get to meet her in later years, when I was performing at Don-the-Beachcomber's at the International Marketplace. She was spending her honeymoon there and she introduced herself to me as being the cover girl. Of course I was amazed to meet her in person. I've lost track of her since. I suppose she's happily married and if she has any children, they must be at least late teenagers or in their early 20s.

I'm amazed that you can do completely ordinary songs and still manage to imbue them with the same spirit that was in your music in the past.

What I've done in the past has always been an extension of what I do on the piano, and being able to articulate it, and put it into an orchestral form. Primarily, my basic feeling is that I'm a professional. I have been all of my life, and I still try to convey that professionalism in my spirit and in my performing. I really put forth my best effort, and although what you hear may be somewhat reminiscent stylewise of some of the things I've done in the past - my repertoire goes back so many, many years - so I imaginatively try to put as much feeling and excitement as I can into my performance.

Do you have any recurring dreams?

I wouldn't put it that way, but perhaps in the back of my mind every once in a while, I get a nostalgic feeling that perhaps it would be so great to reorganise my group again, get into the mainstream, and get some of the wonderful vibrations that I've had in the past from playing to audiences, being involved in a group such as I had before, and even transcending that by playing with large orchestras. Yes, I've had thoughts that I would like to do some concerts with large orchestras, performing some of the things that I've written and also things that I've done in the past. I would probably use several key people who were with me in the past, such as Augie Cologne, who does all of these marvellous sounds and percussion things. I have enough material and orchestrations to be able to accomplish that. In fact, I have performed several times with large orchestras, once, in Salt Lake City with a 40-piece orchestra, for a very large audience, about 10,000 people. It was really a thrill to perform with a large orchestra playing my things, and my conducting them as well. I've done this on several occasions, but it would be great if I could do something along the lines of Dave Brubeck and George

Shearing have been doing. But somehow or other I've never been able to get around to that, because, for one thing, I don't think I'm up to putting all that effort that goes into it. I'm getting older and I enjoy the good things in life. I'm no longer appearing at the Western Village Hotel - I had been there for over 4 years. I was very fortunate in being signed up to play at the Monolani Bay Hotel on the big island, where the setting is absolutely beautiful. I have a beautiful instrument to play on, and most of the guests that come in are aware of my background, or have my records, or have heard me one time or another - plus the fact that I love to play golf. I play about 4 times a week and I get golfing privileges here on a magnificent, fantastic golf course. The setting here, on the big island, is something you read about, or hear about, that is representative of the real Hawaii. It is not like Waikiki (overcrowded); the beauty of the islands is still here.

At what point did you incorporate the bird calls into your songs?

Once again, during the early days at the Shell Bar. In a certain sense the decision was made for us, because it was an open air situation there, and almost immediately we were aware of this constant competition between us and the birds. As someone conscious of sound I'm sure you've noticed how prevalent birds are here.

They're everywhere! I've never been anywhere where you could hear so many birds.

Exactly. We said 'What are we going to do about this?' It wasn't as if you could ignore the birds, they were as loud as the music, and of course they weren't going to go away, so we thought 'Why not incorporate them into the music?' And so we had members of the band do birdcalls, and, as it turned out, that later became a sort of trademark for us. Later on it seemed like such a natural thing that it's almost hard to imagine ever thinking of the sound of the birds as interfering with our sound.

Lots of sounds only seem alien so long as you consider them alien. As soon as you give in to them, accept them, your experience of them is completely different, how you hear them is different. True, quite true. Besides, the part of music that's most enjoyable isn't always the part that people might suppose.

How do you mean that?

I've always said: 'Harmony isn't what makes music interesting, dissonance is.' When things grate against each other so the sounds seem to have a bite, that's what appeals to the ear.

I always felt your music required people to experience a certain sensation, I mean it always seemed to instill a certain type of feeling in me much more so than other music. It was like it created an atmosphere and that atmosphere would bring about a complete transformation of

everything in its immediate vicinity. I'm sure you've given a lot of thought to sound and what effects it can have; what observations do you have about that?

Well, one of the reasons I was so interested in unusual instruments was because they expanded the territory, soundwise, that I had to work with. Traditional instruments can only give you so much, but when you work with different sounds, the listener is hearing something unfamiliar, not the same notes and sounds he always hears. If we heard a good sound come out of something, we'd use it, no matter what it was, we'd work with it into one of the arrangements.

We'd use anything and everything.

One time we came across some brass pots, and just for the heck of it, gave one a tap to see what it sounded like. The resonance was wonderful. Well, there were other sizes of the pots as well, and of course each size produced a different note. So we listened to every pot there, pulling the store apart, and got all the best sounding ones, and strung them together so they'd hang down one inside another. That way we could run a drumstick along the rims and ring them all at once. We built an entire song around those pots.

So, even though we did make extensive use of ethnic instruments, we found out we could get similar effects out of a lot of things that most people wouldn't ever consider using. We'd make pipes, we'd take things apart and put them back together differently so we could use them differently. One time we took apart a xylophone and put it back together so it would make a perfect glissando!

You'll have to excuse me, but if you start talking musical terminology, you'll lose me. I haven't even the most elementary knowledge in that. I've heard about glissandos, but you'll have to explain what you did to the xylophone.

Okay . . . ordinarily, the notes on a xylophone are like the white keys on a piano. What we did was to arrange it in such a way that it would be like the white keys and the black keys, so that in one swift motion you could get a perfect glissando.

Imagination seems important to your music, not only because a lot of imagination was obviously applied to creating it, but because it has such power to trigger the imagination of the listener.

As far as the creation of the music, we

were always experimenting, always trying something new or different. Sometimes it worked, sometimes it didn't, but we kept doing it because we never knew what we were going to find. And you're definitely right about the imagination of the listener. A man from Germany was visiting here and informed me that he had never had the slightest interest in visiting the islands until he heard my music! He said that my records conveyed the spirit of the islands perfectly as he imagined it, exactly as presented in my albums. Now, that's funny, because there's nothing particularly Hawaiian about my music. It's all imagination. It's a feeling more than anything else. If he had imagined that feeling to be Hawaiian, fine, but it's surely imaginary . . . a matter of suggestion really.

Did you ever hear the version of "Firecracker" that was done by Yellow Magic Orchestra. and if so what did you think of it?

Well, let me put it this way . . . the record was a hit in England and Europe, and in Japan it was a top 10 hit. When those royalty checks arrive in the mail, I'm very happy indeed that Yellow Magic Orchestra chose to record it! (Laughter)

things

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'COFFY'. Paul Fairman, Lancer Books, USA, 1973.

"She's hot, black and she'll cream you!" wailed the Ads for this great Blaxploiter . . . and this Movie tie-in is damned fine too. For starters it gives you a chance to sample just how good and funny the original script was. There's plenty of hopped-up dialogue "He's the heat, Baby", "Take my pussy, lover man", and liberal doses of 'Sheeelit' sprinkled throughout the el-rauncho action - and it's all recorded with sub Chester Himes relish.

There's plenty of stuff in here that's just nowhere in the film. Many of the original film scenes are expanded, and fleshed out to become a heap more hardcore and raunchy. Oh . . . boy, 'Coffy' is a no hold barred experience. (A.O.F.)



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